

ASSOCIATED PRODUCT

GENERAL UPDATES

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February 2024

AIRLINES

Airports Company of South Africa to implement stricter rules for hand luggage: If passengers do not adhere to the following specifications with regards to hand luggage, airlines will be forced to charge for extra baggage. Bags may not exceed the total dimensions of 56cm x 36cm x 23cm. Weight limit per bag: 7kg

Federal Airlines, in partnership with the MORE Family Collection, is pleased to announce the introduction of a new and exciting shuttle route. Commencing from 23 March 2024, the shuttle service will be connecting Madikwe Game Reserve with Marakele National Park for the Marataba Lodges.

Proflight goes to Kafue. From 1 June 2024 – 31 October 2024, flights are on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; Lusaka – Chunga 10.30 - 11.35; Chunga – Lusaka 12.15 - 13.20. Connections to/from Mfuwe, Livingstone and Lower Zambezi.

Due to popular demand, Airlink has reinstated the MQP to VNX flights for the 2024 peak season starting on 1 July 2024 until 05 January 2025. Flights are on Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays/Sundays. The flight will route via Johannesburg on the short MQP-JHB (ORT) leg, and then from JHB (ORT) to VNX on either the daily 11h35 JHB-VNX departure, or on the later second flight on the Monday/Wednesday/Friday/Sunday 14h15 departure.

BOTSWANA

Wild Expeditions will be opening a new camp in the Okavango Delta called Karangoma, which is expected to open on 01 May 2024. The camp is a partnership with local elder Olatotse Sarefo, and is rooted in Bukakhwe San and Hambukushu culture. Karangoma is a Sembukushu word meaning 'drum beating, ancestral healing, or cure-dancing'. Located in the north of NG12 along the Magweagana Channel, there are no other camps in an area of about 50 000ha, and the camp has access to the typical floodplains, channels, lagoons and islands of the Okavango, as well as the vast northern woodlands too. The camp will feature 6 tented suites (one being a family room) on low wooden decks (for high water years). Intrinsic to the purpose of Karangoma is support of the rural communities living adjacent to the Okavango in their management of interactions between wildlife and their livestock. Working with local partners from the community of Gudigwa and innovative NGOs, Karangoma aims to introduce new cattle herding techniques, and also allow their guests the opportunity to experience this interface between wildlife and rural people first hand.

Natural Selection is excited to introduce Jack's Private Camp, which is set away from the main Jack's camp, allowing for exclusivity for families, friends and groups travelling together. Comprising a central lounge and dining area, which is flanked by two expansive bedroom suites, one features a king-size bed, and the other two extra-length king-size beds. Both bedrooms include an additional day bed.

African Bush Camps has revised their provisional booking hold policy for 2024. There is a new 21-day auto release policy for all new bookings. The 14-day contracted hold will continue with reminders sent at 7 and 10 days, but bookings cannot be extended beyond 21 days, which is the maximum hold. The operating date of Linyanti Expeditions has been extended to 30 November 2024 (was previously until 31 October 2024).

Desert & Delta Safaris is excited to announce that Xugana Island Lodge will undergo a transformational rebuild. The project will commence on 15 October 2024, with the grand reopening scheduled for 16 May 2025.

KENYA

Bush & Beyond in Kenya is delighted to announce the addition of NaiSabah to their collection. It is a 75ft traditional Omani dhow that has been carefully repurposed and designed for ocean exploration. Based in the warm waters of the Lamu Archipelago, NaiSabah has three air-conditioned cabins and can comfortably accommodate up to eight people.

SEYCHELLES

The Seychelles Port Authority has notified us of the immediate implementation of a new Ports Levy, effective 01 January 2024. This Levy is mandatory for all passengers travelling from 01 January 2024 onwards.

- Amount: EUR 2 per person, per way.
- Applies to all new and existing ferry bookings.

The Seychelles Tourism Department has issued a reminder that the government-approved platform for Travel Authorisation is seychelles.govtas.com or the Seychelles e-Border app.

To provide further clarity, the current processing fees are as follows:

Standard Processing (24 hours) - €10
Premium Processing (6 hours) - €30
Expedited Processing (60 minutes) - €70

Please be advised that the indicated fees do not include the bank charges and are subject to change. Any modifications to the fees will be promptly communicated. Also note that the application window has also been extended to 30 days.

Four Seasons Seychelles at Desroches Island will be offering additional scheduled flights between Mahé and Desroches Island from 23 March 2024 until 14 April 2024.

Waldorf Astoria Seychelles Platte Island's new Grand Opening date is now set for February 2024.

NAMIBIA

Onguma Collection has updated their child policy, and children 7 years and above are now welcome on game drives. Families with children 7 and below should book a private game drive. Transfers to and from Mokuti airstrip are now free of charge. The Young Explorers walk is now bookable for the morning and the afternoon.

Onguma Tented Camp will re-open in March 2024 after a refurbishment. The rate changes from 1 March 2024 and will only be available on a fully inclusive basis. A butler service can be offered as from 1 March 2024 at an additional cost.

Camp Kala's 2025 rates now include a 60-minute spa treatment in their per-person per-night rate.

Our Habitas Namibia has introduced a half-board rate and they are still working off their dynamic pricing, so rack rates will fluctuate, increasing according to demand.

Mushara Lodge and Villa Mushara will be closed for extensive renovation work from 15 January 2024 until approximately mid-April 2025.

Chiwani Safari Camps' Mowani Mountain Camp has amended their room categories for 2025 bookings onwards.

SOUTH AFRICA

The Barracks is a new Apart Hotel by TPF Hospitality located in Cape Town's City Bowl. The Barracks offers studios, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments. It has a dedicated reception and concierge desk on the lower floor, and a rooftop Wellness Centre & Pool. Ideal for families or longer stays.

Seasons in Africa Tuningi Safari Lodge will be closed between 01 May and June 2024 for a refurb. Thereafter each suite that has not been completed will be closed one at a time and renovated between July 2024 and December 2024.

Makanji Private Game Lodge has lowered their permitted child age to 12 years and over. This will take place with immediate effect in order for any requests for this age group to be accommodated at Makanji going forward.

Madikwe Safari Lodge has introduced a new exclusive-use 3-bedroom villa – Elela Villa – situated at Kopano Lodge.

- No children under 12 years of age.
- A private vehicle is included in the rates for the Villa.
- The Villa accommodates a maximum of six guests and a minimum of one guest.

Franschhoek's **Mont Rochelle Hotel** and all facilities therein including MIKO Restaurant, the bar and spa, will be closed from 01 – 31 July 2024 inclusive for annual winter maintenance and some facility upgrades. During this period, shared accommodation is available in the Manor House, with a limited spa menu offered from the fifth bedroom (the Bunk Room). The Country Kitchen will offer breakfast, lunch and dinner for the duration, attending to the needs of Manor House guests, whilst welcoming external guests as usual.

Savanna Private Game Reserve has announced its 2024 planned upgrades. All the following upgrades have been scheduled in and around dead nights or blocked-off dates, so will not impact operations.

- **Luxury Suites:** The flooring will be upgraded from tiles to laminate wood. The bathrooms' cabinets will be replaced with modern, lighter wood to match the bedrooms. All the plunge pools' Marbelite will also be redone.
- **Executive Suites:** The rooftops will be replaced.
- **Main Lodge:** Maintenance of the thatch roof will be done.

Rhino Sands' Camp Refurbishments Completed: Rhino Sands has just finished an expansive soft refurbishment across the entire camp. While preserving their signature classical safari style, they have introduced vibrant new colours and patterns. Enhancements to their luxury tented suites include a privacy screen between the bedroom and bathroom, revamped closet units featuring a mini bar with a fridge, and a fully equipped tea and coffee station.

Fancourt has announced that the newly renovated Spa at Fancourt is officially open! The new spa renovations have included 9 treatment rooms, two of which are couples' rooms to enjoy the new enhanced spa treatments menu. There is a steam room and cold plunge pool, the tepidarium, revamped signature Roman Baths, and a new relaxation room.

Natural Selection is excited to introduce GweGwe Beach Lodge, which is scheduled to open in March 2024. Located in the Mkambati Nature Reserve along South Africa's Wild Coast, this lodge will consist of 9 en-suite rooms (seven twin and two family).

Newmark Hotels Blaauwklippen is located just outside Stellenbosch and includes a four-bedroomed Manor House and a six-bedroomed Jonkershuis. The accommodation side is now managed by Newmark, and rooms are sold on an individual FIT basis, or the properties can be booked on an exclusive-use basis.

Cape Winelands Airport is located in the picturesque Cape Winelands region and is set to soar to new heights with an airport expansion programme currently underway. Situated 25km from Cape Town International Airport in the northern district of Durbanville, it currently serves general aviation traffic. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2027. The new airport will be a fully commercial airport welcoming domestic and international arrivals.

ZIMBABWE

Changa Safari Camp & The Hide have joined the Africa in Focus representation portfolio.

Palm Hospitality Group has completed the installation of a lift at the Palm River Hotel, enabling seamless accessibility for guests to the first- and second-floor rooms, including the Presidential Suite.

African Bush Camps has revised their provisional booking hold policy for 2024. There is a new 21-day auto-release policy for all new bookings. The 14-day contracted hold will continue, with reminders sent at seven and 10 days, but bookings cannot be extended beyond 21 days, which is the maximum hold. The new Kariba sleep-out aboard the Lady Jaqueline houseboat is now open for bookings. The boat has three levels and four cabins, and can be booked at an additional surcharge per person per night, offering guests the opportunity of their own private houseboat experience on Lake Kariba.

Palm Hospitality Group (Ilala Lodge and Palm River Hotel) has launched a new luxury river cruise: The River Odyssey. The new cruise joins the ever-popular and intimate Ra-Ikane River Cruises that conveniently launch from the jetty site located next door to the Palm River Hotel. The boat can accommodate 30 guests over two decks, with a bar on each deck. Guests are offered a glass of bubbly on arrival, and four courses of delicious snacks are served during the cruise. Both the Ra-Ikane River Cruises and The River Odyssey are available on a private hire basis.

ZAMBIA

African Bush Camps has revised their provisional booking hold policy for 2024. There is a new 21-day auto-release policy for all new bookings. The 14-day contracted hold will continue, with reminders sent at seven and 10 days, but bookings cannot be extended beyond 21 days, which is the maximum hold.

Sindabezi Island has introduced a new launch site and route for both safety and comfort, so that late arrivals to the island in the Zambezi River are now possible.

Previously, guests had to return before sunset, meaning that those with late flights or night activities in Livingstone or Victoria Falls were affected.

The new site bypasses the old detour through Tongabezi Lodge and takes a direct scenic river cruise to Sindabezi Island from the new downstream private jetty. The boat trip takes up to 10 minutes.

Time + Tide will no longer be operating King Lewanika Camp in the Liuwa Plains, as of the end of May 2024. There are currently plans in place for the camp to continue under new management, but at this stage we do not have any details of who the new owners will be.

TANZANIA

Pole Pole Bungalows has advised that they are now operating a cashless system in order to streamline operations, and will now only accept credit card payments for guest extras. The resort has also relaxed the No Phone Usage policy to allow guests the use of mobile devices (in rooms and the reception area only).

Zanzibar White Sands has added a new room type to their offering called Garden Villa with Pool. Earlier this year four new Garden Villas were added to the property, and guests now have the option of booking a Garden Villa with either a Hot Tub or a Pool. Nestled within a lush, tropical paradise, the villas are designed for couples and families seeking a blend of comfort and serenity in nature's lap, with the beachfront just a few steps away. All villas offer a spacious, living area, air-conditioning, bathtub, outside shower, private African garden and are 100% solar powered.

Auric Air has announced a collaborative agreement with MONTE, in a mutual commitment to explore the conversion of Auric Air's fleet to low/zero-emission propulsion technologies. MONTE will work with Auric Air to identify the most suitable propulsion technology for Auric Air and will offer financing for the conversion of Auric

Air's fleet once this technology is approved and certified. MONTE has signed agreements with over 25 aircraft operators, with a total fleet of over 200 aircraft, which have committed to working with MONTE to decarbonise their fleets.

One Nature Hotels has announced plans to open a new lodge, One Nature Mara River, in June 2024. The new lodge is in northern Serengeti, thirty minutes' drive from the Kogatende Airstrip. The property will have seven luxury one-bedroom villas, and a two-bedroom Presidential villa. Each villa features private decks, private heated pools, indoor and outdoor showers, en-suite bathrooms, air-conditioned rooms, an in-room bar, fridge, and a fire stove.

Asilia Africa will be opening a new camp in southern Tanzania's Ruaha National Park in July 2024, called Kokoko Camp. The name is derived from the Verreaux's eagle-owl, the largest African owl, measuring up to 66 centimetres in total length, and widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. This exclusive-use camp will accommodate a maximum of six guests in three tents on the banks of the Mwagusi River, at the site of the old Kwihala camp. The new concept camp is all about making nature the star of the show, with guests hosted by one of Asilia's top safari guides and enjoying exploratory walking safaris, game drives and night drives, star gazing, and dinners surrounded by lanterns, in the riverbed. Asilia Africa will also be **upgrading Rekeru Camp** in 2024 and the camp will be closed for refurbishment on 10 March 2024. The camp will be refreshed and ready for the new season on 01 June 2024.

Nimali Africa will be opening a new product, Nimali House, in June 2024. Nimali House is a private homestead situated within 10 000 acres of unfenced private land overlooking the Maasai Steppe. The house will be bookable for sole use only, and offer five suites accommodating 10 to 12 guests. Guests will be able to do walking and game drives, both on the private concession and in Tarangire National Park.

Laba (ex Selous Safari Company) opened Laba Migration Camp, a new mobile camp, on 22 December 2023 in the Serengeti. The camp consists of 10 tents accommodating 22 guests in 8 double- and two family tents (each with two connecting rooms via an enclosed corridor). The main guest areas include a lounge, dining room, library and bar, and gym tent (Technogym). The mobile camp will dismantle in six days and move to three locations during the year, operating from November to March in southern Serengeti, April to July in western Serengeti, and from August to November in northern Serengeti.

Rivertrees Country Inn in Arusha has added a spa facility to their offering. The Rivertrees Spa, a tranquil sanctuary nestled within Rivertrees Country Inn, is now ready to welcome guests. Spa services available include soothing massages and revitalising skincare, all focused on balancing energies and elevating wellbeing.

Newmark Hotels' Serengeti Sojourn Mobile Camp operations have been discontinued.

Lemala Camps and Lodges will be opening a new lodge in March 2025 – Lemala Osonjoi Lodge, located on the edge of the iconic Ngorongoro Crater. The new lodge is positioned to take advantage of its incomparable location on the crater rim, and is just 250 metres from the current Lemala Ngorongoro Tented Camp. Lemala Osonjoi Lodge guests will have privileged access to prime game-viewing opportunities in the crater via the Lemala access road down to the eastern quadrant of this renowned UNESCO World Heritage site. The lodge will offer 16 suites and two x two-bedroomed suites with slow-burning log stoves, intimate seating areas in the main areas and floor-to-ceiling windows to enjoy the impressive views of the crater floor below. There will also be a heated communal pool using specially developed solar panels.

RWANDA

Amakoro Songa Lodge will be closing from 25 March 2024 to the 25 April 2024 for a one-month renovation. This closure is part of Amakoro Songa Lodge's commitment to providing their guests with the best possible experience. The maintenance work planned during this period will ensure that Amakoro Songa Lodge continues to meet the highest standards of comfort and service.