



WILDERNESS PRODUCT

News and Updates

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GENERAL UPDATES

REGIONAL UPDATES**Water Levels**

This is the latest update, as water levels are dropping drastically. We will be kept informed of any further developments from the camps over the coming weeks.

- **Pelo Camp:** Both boating and mokoro activities are still possible.
- **Jao Camp:** Boating is currently available from Randall's Crossing, a 15-minute drive from camp to Hunda Island. However, due to decreasing water levels this route will soon be replaced by a one-hour road transfer from Jao to Hunda Island. Boating will remain possible but its duration will be shortened to approximately 45 minutes. Mokoro activities remain possible.
- **Kwetsani Camp:** Boating is no longer possible; however, there is still sufficient water to offer mokoro activities.
- **Jacana Camp:** Boating is ongoing, and now located 10 minutes away from the camp. Mokoro activities remain possible front of house but will soon be moved to a new location five minutes from camp.
- **Tube Tree and Little Tube:** Boating is not possible; mokoro activities are still on offer.

The water levels for the following camps remain unchanged as per our previous update:

- **Qorokwe:** Mokoro activities on offer.
- **Vumbura Plains and Little Vumbura:** Both boating and mokoro activities are possible.
- **DumaTau and Little DumaTau:** Boating and barge activities on offer.
- **King's Pool:** Barge activity is currently not operational.

Chitabe Camp Closure

The inventory for Chitabe Main Camp was closed in April 2024 for the following dates: 05 January 2025 to 25 April 2025 (inclusive) for a complete rebuild with regards to accommodation.

Any bookings in the system were contacted at the time and moved accordingly. Chitabe Lediba remains open for business as usual.

AIRLINES**Air Botswana Flight Service Expansion**

The airline announced significant flight services expansion with the introduction of new routes to several destinations within Namibia and South Africa. The expansion is part of the airline's strategic initiative to enhance connectivity across southern Africa, offering passengers more flexibility and convenience.

The new routes will be launched in phases until 01 November 2024.



- Destinations include Durban and Mpumalanga in South Africa and Windhoek in Namibia. Specific routes and commencement dates are as follows:
- Gaborone to Durban and Gaborone to Windhoek: Begins October 1 with three flights per week on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays.
- Maun to Cape Town, Maun to Windhoek, Kasane to Cape Town and Kasane to Windhoek: All beginning 01 November 2024 with three flights per week on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.
- Kasane to Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport: Begins 01 November with three flights per week on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

The airline is also reinstating services suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic, including routes from Johannesburg to Maun, Kasane and Francistown. The frequency of existing routes, such as Gaborone to Cape Town, Harare and Lusaka, will also increase from 01 November 2024.

Airlink Direct Flight Cape Town-Gaborone, April 2025

Independent regional airline Airlink is proceeding with plans to launch direct Cape Town-Gaborone flights from 01 April 2025.

- This follows confirmation by regulatory authorities in Botswana and South Africa that all of the necessary approvals are in place to allow Airlink to serve the route.
- Airlink will deploy 44-seat Embraer E140 regional jets on the route. Fares will include a 20-kg free economy class checked-in luggage allowance plus a 15-kg sporting equipment allowance. Full fare economy (Y class) tickets will include a 30-kg complimentary luggage allowance. On board, customers will be treated to a complimentary light meal and refreshments.

Airlink's planned flight schedule for the Cape Town-Gaborone route is outlined below:

- Depart 4Z364 CPT 10h50, arrive GBE at 13h00
Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays
 - Depart 4Z365 GBE at 13h45, arrive CPT at 16h00
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FIRST-HAND FEEDBACK

During May, Reservations Project Manager Tanya Karovsky visited Wilderness Chitabe, Vumbura Plains North and King's Pool camps.

Wilderness Chitabe

This camp made my soul happy. The staff was warm, the food plentiful and delicious, and our guide, BB, was incredible. Chitabe offers a classic feel with modern comforts. The game viewing was fantastic: cheetahs, leopards, lions, elephants and more. The terrain in this concession is highly diverse: one moment you feel like you're in a desert, surrounded by dead leadwood trees; the next, you're driving along the river, enjoying an abundance of water birds and lush vegetation.

Wilderness Vumbura Plains North

Vumbura is simply amazing. The stunning rooms and décor blend seamlessly with the Delta. A mokoro ride with our poler, Joe, was a highlight, as were his authentic, engaging stories. Guide OB's cultural talk and the choir's performance on Boma Night were standout moments. After the mokoro ride, Gee and trainee guide Kevin explained how Wilderness collaborates closely with the Okavango Community Trust and local communities, interesting and enriching information. We also took a 15-minute scenic helicopter ride, an absolute must for any guest!

Wilderness King's Pool

The staff and guide were fantastic, and we were treated like royalty during our stay. Special touches like a sundowner stop and brunch at the Elephant Hide made the experience even more memorable. The rooms are gorgeous, with spectacular views; each one has an outdoor lounge set lower to the ground, great for game viewing. I've never seen so many elephants!



Tracy-Lee Davids and Berelize Jansen from our Namibia office visited Botswana in March and shared their experience.

Wilderness Little Vumbura

On arrival at the airport we were warmly greeted by Wilderness staff, feeling special with our boarding passes and personalised water bottles. Flying over the Delta was magical. Upon landing, our guide Max arranged a beautiful picnic before taking us by boat to the camp. Wilderness Little Vumbura, with its intimate setting and eight well-designed tents, felt like home. The food was delicious, served with care. A boat trip with Max revealed bird life, lechwes and hippos.

Wilderness Vumbura Plains

After breakfast, we transferred to Vumbura Plains North, welcomed again by the Wilderness team. The camp's art, interior design and luxurious suites were highlights. Guide Mocks was knowledgeable and

skilled, tracking two lions and a cheetah despite the high grass. A mokoro ride with Sticky amazed us, as his sharp eyes spotted tiny frogs, adding to the unique experience. Our trip ended with relaxing by the plunge pool, appreciating more views of Delta wildlife.

All in all, our trip to Wilderness Vumbura Plains and Little Vumbura offered a blend of luxurious accommodation, thrilling wildlife encounters, a variety of activities and unbeatable hospitality, set against the backdrop of the astounding Okavango Delta. Unforgettable.



Louise Newland recently went on a Botswana educational trip and shared some feedback on her stay at Wilderness Jao.

Wilderness Jao

Wilderness Jao is set in a breathtaking location surrounded by riverine forests and wide floodplains. The camp is modern and luxurious, with a sophisticated, contemporary style that boasts stunning features throughout. The two-story main area includes a custom gallery-museum, a library, a traditional boma for dining under the stars, an excellent wine cellar and a well-equipped gym.

The suites and villas are spacious and uniquely designed. They feature wood and thatch roofing, with a mix of glass and mesh walls, all elevated on composite decks connected by wooden walkways.

Known for its top-notch treatments and luxury, the award-winning spa offers the Delta's most sublime spa experience.

The food presentation was creative and visually appealing, and each meal flavourful and plentiful. The menu changed daily, with especially impressive vegetarian options.

The staff was incredibly warm and welcoming. Management staff PK and Reuben were notable for their personable natures, thorough briefings and willingness to share their stories. Disco and Captain, our mokoro guides, were knowledgeable, engaging and delightfully humorous.

