

ASSOCIATED PRODUCT

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SOUTH AFRICA

January 2025

GENERAL UPDATES

&Beyond is upgrading the Family Suite at Ngala Safari Lodge to a new Family Villa. The Family Villa will now accommodate a maximum of six guests (four adults and two children) and will still include a private vehicle. During the renovation period from **17 January to 31 May 2025**, the Family Villa will be closed. Along with the build of the new Family Villa, they are taking the time to revamp a few other areas around the lodge, including converting the existing bar into a wine cellar, building a new bar on the tea deck, upgrading the popular boma area, as well as some other general lodge maintenance. While the lodge team remains committed to minimising any disturbance during this period, please be aware that there may be some noise and the presence of construction materials in the affected areas.

&Beyond – Increase in Guests Conservation Contribution (GCC) Levy for the Sabi Sand Nature Reserve

All bookings made before 31 December 2024, for travel between 01 January and 31 December 2025, will retain the current GCC levy rate. The GCC levy increase will apply to new bookings made from 01 January 2025 onwards.

The new rates are as follows:

- **&Beyond Tengile River Lodge** new rate for all guests is ZAR 957.50 per person per night (max 3 nights) – including VAT
- **&Beyond Kirkman's Kamp** new rate for all guests is ZAR 574 per person per night (max 3 nights) – including VAT

It is important to note that other properties in the reserve will also be affected by the GCC increase. Please contact your Travel Designer for information on the increases relevant to our partner properties in the Sabi Sand Nature Reserve.

Shamwari Sarili Private Villa has completed its renovations. The 2 luxurious suites and 4 rooms are beautifully appointed, offering breath-taking views. Indulge in the private spa and state-of-the-art fitness facilities, along with the lap- and plunge pools. The elegant common areas are mindfully designed for socialising, and there is even a separate children's lounge and play area. With butler service and private safari vehicles, this is the perfect escape for families or close friends seeking a private safari.

Spier Hotel, which is scheduled to open March 2025, has started taking bookings. Their new Spa, which features the signature Cape Herbal Bath House, is currently being completed. It will also offer a mindful movement studio, a resident physiotherapist, 10 treatment rooms, a mani-pedi station, an infrared sauna, a steam room, cold therapy, and a private pool.

Tintswalo Boulders has implemented a new Conservation Fee of R100 pr person per stay, **applicable to new bookings**.

The Pink Door villa in Franschhoek is the latest addition to The Oyster Collection, sister property to La Fontaine and Avondrood. This beautiful new 3-bedroomed villa opened its doors on 22 December 2024 – a great option for families and small groups, at very competitive pricing and centrally located, so walking distance to the many galleries, boutiques and restaurants.

Franschhoek House is the latest addition to La Residence, with six luxurious suites, all designed by founder Liz Biden, decorated with hand-embroidered and printed silks, local tapestries and vintage items. A heated pool, games room, outdoor patios and verandas, interactive kitchen, make the perfect offering for an intimate stay for family or friends. The official opening took place on 01 December 2024.

The Liz McGrath Collection has changed its check-in and check-out times at all 3 hotels: The Cellars-Hohenort Hotel (Cape Town), The Marine Hotel (Hermanus) and The Plettenberg Hotel (Plettenberg Bay). The new check-in time is 15h00 (was 14h00) and the new check-out time is 10h00 (was 11h00).

ROOI Restaurant at One&Only Cape Town is a new culinary destination that celebrates authentic African flavours. ROOI means *red* in Afrikaans, riffing on the theme of fire, and reflecting its innovative, grill-cooked cuisine. Décor highlights include an entrance mural depicting an enchanted African landscape, a copper oven and an inlay rug inspired by the Cape's rich flora and fauna.

The **Winchester Hotel** has opened its brand-new Sanctuary Spa, a beautiful and serene space offering a range of massages and treatments, whilst their Shoreditch Restaurant culinary showcase offers some interesting new flavours in an authentic fusion of local and global elements.

Mosaic Lagoon Lodge, located on the Hermanus Lagoon close to Stanford, has opened its new Family Cottage. Designed with 2 bedrooms (one with twin beds), it also offers its own hot tub. Nestled among ancient milkwood trees, the lodge provides an exclusive, all-inclusive retreat, tranquil spa treatments, and immersive adventures, perfect for nature lovers and families.

Boschendal has introduced a new activity, the Wine & Wander Safari Tour, which for now, takes place once a week on Saturdays from 10h00 – 13h00; however, they can offer custom experiences, as well as on request for groups. The tour explores the scenic Simonsberg slopes in an open safari vehicle, with an expert guide sharing the stories behind the working farm. Enjoy a delicious brunch platter and wine tasting at the View Point, inclusive of a *sabrage* experience.

Hazendal Yacht is the latest addition to the Hazendal offering. Step aboard the ultra-luxurious Hazendal Yacht and experience Cape Town from a different vantage point, sailing from the V&A Waterfront to beautiful destinations along the West Coast or the Cape Peninsula. The Hazendal Yacht is a spectacular 85 ft motorised luxury yacht. Day cruises and overnight charters can be customised. Instead of staying at a hotel guests can now opt to overnight on the Hazendal Yacht to experience a private and elite stay in the Cape.

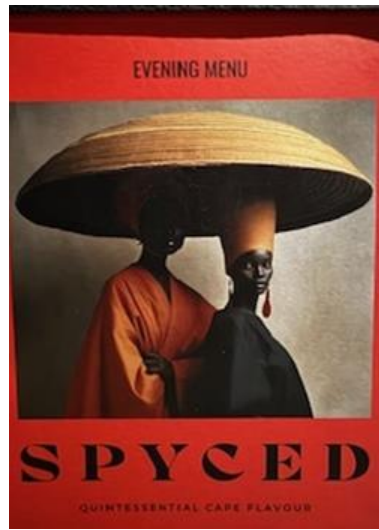
SPECIALS

La Clé Galerie and Manoir Villa (both 2-bedroomed villas) have introduced reduced rates based on a maximum of 2 people – perfect for honeymooners and couples wanting the exclusivity and private space that a villa stay affords. Also please note that the minimum night stays for the La Clé Offer has been increased from 2 to 3 nights, in order to qualify for the 20% savings. The validity of this special has been extended, and now valid from 11 May to 19 December 2025.

Last Word Madikwe has released a Stay 3-Pay 2 Offer for new bookings for stays until the end of February 2025. This is a great family option as they have a 3-bedroomed family villa and offer activities for all ages. Kids 6+ can participate in the scheduled game drives.

FIRST-HAND FEEDBACK

Destination:	SPYCED (new Restaurant at Cape Town’s Waterfront Silo District)
Participants:	Michelle Reyneke, Jaques Momberg, Ashley Brown, Astrid Botha, Gadeejah Fredericks
Suits which type of traveller:	FITs, small groups of friends or families, from all nationalities that are interested in quintessential Cape flavours. Also larger groups.
Cuisine & offering:	Sister restaurant to GOLD, they also offer optional Djembe drumming from 18:30, followed by the Cape Malay Food Celebration set menu from 19:15, accompanied by live jazz. It also opens for lunch and offers a curated Cape Malay-inspired small plate à la carte menu, designed to offer a culinary adventure. Furthermore, they offer a cooking experience and lunch with the renowned Fayruza Abrahams, delving into the rich traditions of Malay cuisine.
Highlights during visit/stay:	Head Chef Fayruza is endlessly passionate and proud of the culinary experience she has created, intertwined with the history and story behind each dish, and really elevates the product offering. <i>Cape Malay cuisine at Michelin star level!</i>
Caveats:	The restaurant can accommodate up to 200 people, so something to bear in mind would be larger groups. The Lunch Cooking Experience can take up to 43 people but small private FIT bookings can also be accommodated.



Destination:	Shamwari, Eastern Cape
Participants:	Alison May
Suits which type of traveller:	All of our guests!
Recommended activities:	Shamwari was a very pleasant surprise for me. The lodges are well spread out and one doesn't often see other game drive vehicles. There are also a number of different habitats, which lends itself to a good minimum 4-night stay! Once the additional land is finalised for the boating, this will be another really good activity.
Highlights during visit/stay:	Wonderful array of wildlife including white rhino, black rhino, caracal, eland. The accommodations are very different and would tick all the boxes for different types of travellers. Riverdene is an indoors- and outdoors learning centre.

Destination:	Kwandwe Private Game Reserve, Eastern Cape
Participants:	Alison May
Suits which type of traveller:	Suited to almost any of our guests. Adventurers, honeymooners, family, multi-gen, slow safaris, birders, conservation enthusiasts
Recommended activities:	<p>I would strongly recommend our agents' client's book at least one of the extra conservation activities offered. The Rhino Monitoring Drive teaches one about the importance of monitoring Kwandwe's white and black rhino populations. It's a prelude to the other experiences. It's also a rather special activity to get an authentic experience of how to keep track of these endangered species.</p> <p>The rhino conservation participation activity is next level! It's an up-close and personal activity with meaningful interactions between Kwandwe Management, their Ecologist and the Vet. One gets to do data collection – from just touching the roughness of this prehistoric mammal's feet, or marvelling at the softness of the skin between her legs, to horn measurements, giving</p>



	<p>injections and collaring, and much more hands-on activities like removing ticks from 'unsightly' places, getting a faeces sample and pulling hair follicles. It's up to you!</p> <p>The Backstage Kwandwe activity is truly a behind-the-scenes, unscripted 4-day experience. The cost goes directly towards the conservation and protection of white and black rhino, as well as habitat restoration. One can't have one without the other. Included is all of the above, as well as technological and drone demonstrations, an anti-poaching APU K9 demonstration and sundowners with the head of the tactical unit. There is also spekboom planting, habitat restoration and long-term carbon sequestration. In my book it's a must!</p>
Highlights during visit/stay:	<p>It was quite an emotional and nostalgic time for me personally. Our guests will be blown away by these experiences – the privacy offered due to the size of the reserve, as well as the incredibly diverse wildlife. It's not your typical savannah grassland, although this is there, but think ancient dwarf forests as well as <i>Acacia karoo</i> and Karoo scrub. So one can see cheetah, bat-eared fox, gemsbok, impala and springbok, eland, bushbuck and of course both black and white rhino! We saw a crash of 11 white rhino, which matched my previous record from many years ago.</p>
Caveats:	<p>Long drive from Gqeberha (helicopter is a great alternative). Don't expect massive herds of plains game, but there is a plethora of species!</p>

Destination:	Mantis No. 5 Boutique Art Hotel, Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth)
Participants:	Alison May
Suits which type of traveller:	Clients interested in art (main hotel) or soccer (villa)
Recommended activities:	<p>This is a nice overnight boutique hotel in the beachfront suburb of Summerstrand. Very turquoise! Very arty and quirky! Sadly, there is no one to explain the artwork, i.e. no tour, (there used to be) but there is a comprehensive book in each room.</p> <p>The 'movie night' is quite cool! Private experience in their small cinema with burgers and sparkling wine.</p> <p>The transfer company (Safari Transfer Company – Gunter) can organise a half-day tour of the city (historical).</p>
Cuisine:	<p>The evening menu was quite limited and local foods (stews, pork, pap, etc.) but they were very accommodating and organised a burger from the lunch menu for me. Breakfast was surprisingly very good, with lots of choice.</p> <p>There are one or two good restaurants in town apparently (highly recommended to have a transfer).</p>
Highlights during visit/stay:	<p>The staff were very accommodating and friendly. The spa is very nicely laid out with lots of options.</p> <p>The hotel has a zero-plastic policy, which is awesome! There is a huge wire praying mantis in the grounds where all the plastic is collected.</p>

Destination:	Federal Air (Flight from Cape Town Airport to Winelands Airstrip)
Participants:	Alex Rautenbach
Suits which type of traveller:	Guests wanting that added touch of comfort, convenience and privacy that a private aircraft affords.
Offering:	FedAir invited some members of the trade to showcase their brand-new PC12 NGs and VIP Caravans; a lovely joy ride between Cape Town airport and the Winelands Airstrip, along a scenic coastal flight.
Highlights:	For one leg we flew in the PC12 and the leg back in the Caravan. The offering is as luxurious in both of them, with the PC12 affording slightly more luxurious seats (seats can recline fully and swivel around, and have taller seat backs) and greater cabin volume. It also offers considerably faster speed and more range. Both aircraft flew low along the coastline around Cape Point, and the views were simply breath-taking. The Cape Town lounge has a cosy and inviting feel to it, where guests can relax and have refreshments before boarding their flight.
Caveats:	Private charter flights come at a cost. But if budget allows, it is highly recommend!

