

ASSOCIATED PRODUCT

FIRST-HAND FEEDBACK

[South Africa](#) | [Kenya](#) | [Botswana](#)




Written by Wilderness Staff

June 2025

SOUTH AFRICA

Destination:	Curate – A New Fine-Dining Restaurant at Ellerman House
Suits which type of traveller:	All Ellerman House guests (except children under 12 years), especially those who enjoy a fine-dining culinary experience. Also open to the general public, not just hotel residents.
Cuisine & Offering:	An 8-course, elevated, fine-dining experience that reimagines South African cuisine. Curate is led by Head Chef Kieran Whyte and showcases a meticulously crafted, multi-course tasting menu. Each dish highlights the finest seasonal ingredients, drawing inspiration from Southern Africa's rich culinary heritage and diverse cultural influences.
Highlights during visit/stay:	<p>Your dedicated host meets you at the door and takes you on a tour of the house, highlighting the history of the property and its beautiful art. This creates great context for guests not staying at Ellerman House before they embark on their culinary journey.</p> <p>Each dish is a highlight and taste sensation.</p> <p>In between courses you are also taken on a cellar tour. At additional cost they offer a wine-pairing option, with their sommelier taking you on an educational wine journey.</p>
Caveats:	Not recommended for kids under 12 years. Currently open for dinner only Wednesday to Sunday.



Destination:	Jamala Madikwe
Suits which type of traveller:	Couples, honeymooners, nature lovers.
Recommended activities:	The game drives were absolutely phenomenal. We were incredibly lucky to see a wide variety of wildlife, including lions, rhinos, wild dogs, hyenas, and more. The guides were not only knowledgeable and passionate, but also engaging storytellers who brought the bush to life with every outing.
Cuisine & Offering:	Every dish was a masterpiece, blending rich flavours with beautiful presentation. It felt like fine dining in the heart of the bush – a culinary experience we won't soon forget.
Highlights during visit/stay:	<p>The lodge is simply breathtaking – a perfect fusion of luxury and nature. Every detail has been thoughtfully considered, creating a space that feels both intimate and indulgent.</p> <p>The entire team was outstanding: warm, friendly, and deeply passionate about creating a memorable experience for every guest.</p> <p>One of the most touching aspects of our stay was how personal and thoughtful everything felt – from the beautiful welcome and farewell gifts to the little surprises that added an extra touch of magic throughout our stay. It was clear that the team goes above and beyond to make each guest feel truly valued.</p> <p>The camp is fully wheelchair-friendly.</p>
Caveats:	No children under 16 years.
  	

Destination:	City Lodge O R Tambo
Suits which type of traveller:	General travellers looking for convenient, budget-friendly accommodation near the airport. Not ideal for high-end or luxury-focused travellers.
Recommended activities:	N/A – This hotel is primarily suited for short stays or layovers.
Cuisine:	Only sampled the breakfast offering, which was impressive. It featured a wide variety of options and was of good quality.
Highlights during visit/stay:	N/A
Points to note:	Be prepared for a fairly long walk between the terminal and the hotel.







	Guests must manage their own luggage at the elevator to access the reception area. A 'Meet and Greet' service would be a welcome improvement. While the accommodation is basic, it is clean, comfortable, and perfectly adequate for an overnight stay. Tip: Request a room away from the restaurant area, as it can get quite noisy.
--	---

KENYA


Destination:	Hemingways Nairobi
Suits which type of traveller:	Families, groups of friends, and high-end travellers seeking a refined and relaxing experience.
Recommended activities:	Indulge in the spa, complete with a sauna and steam room. Visit the Karen Blixen Museum for a touch of history and culture. Shop at Kobe Tough for authentic Maasai beaded crafts and clay items.
Cuisine:	Dine in style with exceptional evening meals served in an elegant setting. The extensive breakfast buffet caters to a variety of dietary needs, offering a wide selection of fresh, flavourful options.
Highlights during visit/stay:	Sip sundowners at the bar while soaking in stunning scenic views. Enjoy gourmet cuisine paired with warm, attentive service. Experience the genuine hospitality that defines the stay. Wander or unwind amidst lush, beautifully landscaped gardens.
Points to note:	<p>The Karen Blixen Suite is a junior suite that can interconnect with an executive suite – perfect for families. It accommodates an extra bed or cot for a child and offers elevated luxury compared to the Deluxe Rooms.</p> <p>Deluxe Rooms are located on the lower level, can be configured with twin beds, and sleep up to three guests.</p> <p>The Hemingway Presidential Suite is a premium offering for two guests seeking exclusivity.</p> <p>The Elspeth Huxley Room is a thoughtfully designed deluxe room tailored to guests with disabilities.</p> <p>Guests can enjoy scenic walks through the gardens or request a golf-cart escort to their accommodation.</p>



Destination:	Hemingways Ol Seki Mara
Suits which type of traveller:	All types of traveller: solo travellers, couples, families, and small groups seeking an intimate, culturally rich, and wildlife-abundant safari experience in Kenya.
Recommended activities:	Thrilling game drives with knowledgeable guides; Immersive cultural village visits; Guided bush walks; Scenic hot air balloon rides; Horseback safaris across the savannah.
Cuisine:	Breakfast: A healthy continental buffet; Lunch: Light, fresh dishes ideal for the midday heat; Dinner: A rotating menu featuring seafood and hearty Kenyan cuisine.
Highlights during visit/stay:	Afternoon game drives capped with sundowners at stunning lookout spots; Insightful visits to local Maasai villages with opportunities to shop for handmade crafts; Panoramic wilderness views from the tented camp, teeming with wildlife.
Points to note:	<p>Accommodation: Hemingways Ol Seki Mara is an exclusive, luxury tented camp set in the heart of the Naboisho Conservancy, just north of the Masai Mara Reserve. With only 8 Nina Tents and 2 private villas (Chui and Simba), the camp hosts a maximum of 20 guests – ensuring a personalised and intimate safari experience.</p> <p>Service & Staff: Warm, attentive service led by Lodge Manager Debbie, who makes guests feel personally welcomed; Highly professional guides like Isaac, all trained through the respected Koiyaki Guiding School; 70% of staff come from the local Maasai community, enriching the cultural authenticity of the experience.</p> <p>Camp currently lacks tent systems lockable from the outside – something to consider for guests preferring added security.</p>
 	

Destination:	Hemingways Watamu
Suits which type of traveller:	Families, couples, and groups; Those seeking a family-friendly, culturally rich coastal retreat with a mix of relaxation, water adventures, and local flavour.
Recommended activities:	Dolphin and dhow cruises – relax on the water with delicious snacks on board; Snorkelling (at additional cost) – explore vibrant marine life; Paddleboarding & SUP (free of charge) – enjoy calm coastal waters; Shopping – visit local Malindi markets for crafts and curios; Lunch at Pappa Remo's – a local gem with great ambiance; Sundowners at Licht Haus – chill vibes with stunning views; Spa treatments – unwind and rejuvenate.
Cuisine:	Buffet Breakfast & Dinner: Rich in vegetarian options with a noticeable Indian influence; À la Carte Menu: Wide and diverse offering for all palates; Snacks on Dhow Cruise: Memorable and delicious.
Highlights during visit/stay:	Dolphin and dhow cruises in respectful, eco-conscious style; Stunning sunrises and sunsets along a beautiful beach stretch; Spacious, airy apartments with a relaxed, breezy atmosphere; A vibrant beach vibe that blends activity with serenity; Excellent activity centre with knowledgeable, courteous guides.
Points to note:	Travel Info: Flights depart from Wilson Airport, Nairobi. Approx. 1-hr flight from Naboisho to Wilson, followed by a 2-hr layover and a 1-hr 40min flight to Malindi. Accommodation Notes: North Wing offers a quieter environment; Beach is not private, but resort security ensures that guests are not disturbed by beach vendors. Points to Note: Activity staff go the extra mile for a fulfilling experience; Dolphins are approached respectfully, setting staff there apart from other operators.
 	

Destination:	Hemingways Eden
Suits which type of traveller:	All types of travellers and all markets – solo, couples, families, and business guests. Travellers looking for a quiet, charming retreat in Nairobi with easy access to key cultural attractions and a touch of warmth and tradition.
Recommended activities:	The Giraffe Centre – get up close with Rothschild giraffes;

	<p>David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust – visit rescued baby elephants; Karen Blixen Museum – step into the legacy of “Out of Africa”; Kazuri Beads – explore handcrafted beadwork by local artisans; Nairobi National Park – safari just minutes from the city; Bomas of Kenya – discover Kenya’s cultural heritage through music and dance.</p>
Cuisine:	<p>The Deck & The Egg Bar – a refined fine-dining experience with a sophisticated atmosphere;</p>
Highlights during visit/stay:	<p>A surprisingly warm welcome after 5 nights with the Hemingways Collection: porters dressed in Maasai attire created a festive arrival; Evening entertainment around the fire pit with traditional Maasai singing and dancing; Dinner at The Deck and the Egg Bar was a standout culinary experience.</p> <p>The property itself is rich in history, offering a boutique hotel feel with intimate charm.</p>
Points to note:	<p>Accommodation Notes: Ideal for overnight stays or as a final stop before departing Nairobi. Main House has a family-friendly room with 3 x ¾ beds (perfect for children). Loft Room suits solo travellers or couples but has a compact bathroom that could benefit from refurbishment.</p> <p>Accessibility: Approx. 5 minutes from the Giraffe Centre 15-20 minutes from Wilson Airport or 35-40 minutes from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport by private transfer (depending on traffic).</p>
	

BOTSWANA

Destination:	Gomoti Plains Camp – Machaba Safaris
Suits which type of traveller:	Suitable for families and groups of friends and travellers that are more price-conscious.
Recommended activities:	Morning and evening game drives; when water levels allow mokoro and boating and during the winter months walking, when grass levels are much lower and visibility is better.
Cuisine:	Light breakfast on wake-up prior to morning activities; brunch/lunch served on return to camp after activity. High tea at 16:00 or upon arrival back at camp; dinner generally served between 20:00-20:30.

	<p>Both lunch and dinner have menu options with a variety of meal variations to choose from;</p> <p>Meals are all plated;</p> <p>Bush/cultural dinner offered every 3rd night;</p> <p>Halaal dietary considerations are exceptional;</p> <p>Self-service bar, tea and coffee station are available throughout the day in the main areas.</p>
Highlights during visit/stay:	<p>Staff welcomed us with the most beautiful song, and throughout our stay entertained us with singing and dancing, drawing in all camp guests;</p> <p>Field bar coolers in rooms were filled with ice, AND (genius actually) ice-cold kikoi were given to us as we went out on the afternoon activity – worn like scarves to keep cool;</p> <p>Game experience was excellent.</p>



Destination:	Kwando Lebala Camp - Linyanti
Suits which type of traveller:	Those seeking a classic bush camp feel. Suitable for families and groups of friends and travellers that are more price-conscious.
Recommended activities:	Morning and evening game drives and guided walks available during the dry winter months. No water activities.
Cuisine:	We arrived in time for lunch, which was adequate, followed by high tea and a bush dinner. The meals were like a home-cooked experience.
Highlights during visit/stay:	A surprise sundowner in the bush (aka lion-kill chase). The game experience was out of this world, with some of the best guiding we have experienced in such a diverse area.