



ASSOCIATED PRODUCT

FIRST-HAND FEEDBACK

Nikita Wichtmann, from the US Operations team in Cape Town, recently visited some of our partner properties and Wilderness camps in Namibia.

- **The Olive Exclusive** is situated in a quiet suburb of Windhoek, with each room beautifully decorated to uniquely represent Namibia. Private parking is available, and the on-site dining is nothing short of luxury. I personally like this property because I think it would be perfect for a pre- (or post-) tour overnight stay, as the décor gives guests an idea of what they are yet to experience.
- **The Hotel Heinitzburg**, also located in Windhoek, is perfectly situated to deliver all-round views of the city while enjoying your sundowners at the Garden Terrace Restaurant. With a strong European feel, each one of their 16 rooms is uniquely decorated. After a day of travelling, guests can enjoy the relaxing terrace or pool, and then have a private dinner in the wine cellar, which has a large selection of premium wines. I personally like this property as it has a rich history, unique architecture, and beautiful city views.
- **Ongava Lodge** is set on a hill, offering guests endless, breath-taking views of Ongava Private Game Reserve. There is a spa deck (also utilised by the rest of the Ongava properties), swimming pool and a chapel. With lots of steps and uneven walkways around the lodge it is unfortunately not ideal for guests with mobility issues. Management has advised that there is a renovation scheduled for 2023. I personally like this property for its beautiful views over the reserve, the hide and various conservation initiatives.
- **Wilderness Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp (HSC)** has 8 spacious tents, a swimming pool and an educational visitors' centre. It is the perfect camp for guests to truly understand the meaning of impactful travel when choosing Wilderness as their preferred travel operator. With the inclusion of a Skeleton Coast excursion on a 3-night stay, there is no doubt that HSC should be included in guests' itineraries when visiting Southern Africa.

Siyamthemba Qoboza, Operation Specialist for the Latin Cape Town team, also visited some of our partner properties and Wilderness camps in Namibia.

- **The Weinberg Hotel** is situated in Klein Windhoek on the AM Weinberg Estate, about 30 mins from Windhoek's Hosea Kutako International Airport, and about 15 mins from Eros Airport. The Estate features restaurants of different culinary styles as well as the Soulstice Day Spa. The hotel has 41 rooms, in 5 different room categories, including Family rooms. Their Family rooms can accommodate 2 adults and up to 2 additional children under the age of 12 years old on a pull-out sofa. Each room has a balcony/patio, and shower only in the bathroom. They do have 2 rooms that have a bathtub only in their bathrooms. Laundry services are available, and they also have a gym on the property. One thing to note is that the hotel does not have a pool, but as they are partnered with Soulstice Day Spa, which has a pool, guests can make use of it (at an extra cost). It gets quite busy in the afternoons, with some of the locals coming in for lunch and dinner at some of the restaurants located on the property. The hotel has modern feel to it, perfect

for all markets for just an overnight before you head to your desert safari. Would recommend for the younger generation as you can get to enjoy the pleasures of city life in this hotel.

- **Ongava Tented Camp** is an intimate camp located in Ongava Private Game Reserve, approximately 30 mins from Etosha National Park's Andersson Gate. The camp is built to have minimal impact on the land, and overlooks an active waterhole. The camp has 7 tented suites, 1 Family unit and 2 Guide rooms. The suites are built on wooden decks with private verandas looking out into the wilderness. The Family unit is made up of two tents, linked by a short, curved walkway. The property is unfenced and located in a wildlife area, so animals do pass through. A guide escorts guests to their rooms after dark. The main area consists of a lounge, dining space, a bar, large open veranda and a pool. Activities include game drives in Etosha National Park, and walks and game drives in Ongava Reserve, which also has several game-viewing hides and waterholes. This camp differs to the other Ongava properties on the reserve as they are a bit more upmarket, whereas Ongava Tented Camp has a more rustic feel to it. Although we didn't see inside any of the rooms of this camp, I think it is for adventurous guests or bush lovers as it has a true bush feel. Guests staying here also have access to the photographic hides that are at the other Ongava properties in the Reserve.
- **Wilderness Damaraland Camp** is situated in a very remote and rugged area. The camp is approximately 30 mins transfer by road from Doro Nawas Airstrip, depending on game sightings on the way. The camp has 10 thatched tented suites, including a Family unit, which is right next to the main area. It consists of two separate tents each with en-suite bathrooms. Each tent has a separate entrance but shares the outdoor deck and seating area. Each tent has a view of the rocky landscape and distant mountains surrounding the area. The main area consists of extensive shady decks with scattered seating and dining tables, a bar, and a swimming pool just next to the bar. The camp has the friendliest and most welcoming staff – loved their breakfast surprise, which was set up outside of camp, approximately 5 mins drive to a perfect spot up on a hill, where they prepared our breakfast campfire-style. Activities include morning and afternoon game drives, where you get to see desert-adapted wildlife in stunning surrounds, guided nature walks (weather permitting), the Twyfelfontein excursion – a World Heritage Site to view ancient San rock art – and the Damara Living Museum, which is not far from Twyfelfontein. The cultural experience at the Damara Living Museum was amazing as it also came as a surprise. We were not advised that there would be actual people inside the museum – Damara people bringing their culture to life through tourism with the purpose of keeping their traditions alive. I think that this camp would suit older clientele interested in an authentic cultural experience – from the camp itself to the authentic staff, and the culture and fascinating history of this region.

Thato Mawela from the GSE team in Johannesburg recently did an educational to Botswana and visited Mma Dinare.

- **Mma Dinare** overlooks the Gomoti River and is adjacent to Moremi Game Reserve. It accommodates 18 guests in 9 very stylish tents, one of which is a Family tent, each with an outdoor shower. There is also a guide tent. Amazing game-viewing at this property. In fact, this was the only property during our whole trip where we saw incredible game including lions, elephants, buffalos, hippos and cheetahs, to name a few, together with a variety of general game. The guides are very knowledgeable and friendly, and staff, who

are well trained, made us feel like nothing was too much to ask of them, always willing to assist or go the extra mile. The lodge has Wi-Fi, something guests should be aware of. There is a big pool and curio shop, but no spa treatments. I feel that this is a great property that would be suitable for all markets and will not disappoint.

Carmen Manuel from the Private Guides team in Cape Town recently visited some of our partner properties in Botswana.

- **Thamo Thelele** is situated in a quiet suburb of Maun, and has beautifully decorated rooms. Private parking is available for small groups, and it has on-site dining. I like this property because it would be perfect for a pre- or (post-) tour overnight stay as it gives guests an idea of what they are yet to experience.
- **Machaba Kiri Camp** was a great first stop on our Botswana trip. Each of the eco-luxury canvas tents is set on elevated decks. Kiri is located in a private concession renowned for wildlife. Great sightings of lions and wild dogs. The rooms are huge with indoor and outdoor showers, and are big enough to add an extra bed for a child. This is a family-friendly camp that also offers intimate and private experiences.