



25 August 2017

NEWSFLASH

Kaza Visa Shortage

There is currently a shortage of Kaza Visa stickers at key entry points. Zambia have none (Zimbabwe may be in the same situation in a couple of weeks) so please warn guests that they should be prepared to buy normal visas on arrival, with double entry visas recommended depending on travel arrangements. Until this matter has been resolved, standard Zambian visas will be available at these ports of entry:

- Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula International Airport (Livingstone Airport)
- Victoria Falls Border Post (the bridge border on the Zambian side)
- Kazungula Border Post (on the Zambian side coming from Botswana).

IMPORTANT

Qorokwe – New Botswana Classic Camp opening December 2017

Further to the recent introduction of Qorokwe Camp (currently under construction), herewith some facts and figures ...

Facts

- Size – 9 guest rooms consisting of 8 twins & 1 family unit (with own plunge pool) plus pilot/guide room accommodating two with shared en-suite facilities
- Accommodation – raised on decks, combination indoor/outdoor shower, patio, ceiling and pedestal fans
- Main area – dining, lounge and bar overlooking a lagoon
- Camp facilities – central pool, pizza oven, curio shop, sandy pathways on the ground
- Access – Wilderness Air to Gorokwe airstrip (Area 2) and a 40 minute road transfer to camp
- Habitat – Qorokwe's mixed landscape includes scattered acacia and mopane woodlands, open seasonal and permanent floodplains plus picturesque riverine islands along the Gomoti and Santantadibe Channels
- Activities – game drives (including 1 x private vehicle), mekoro and boats (subject to water levels), walking (seasonal and subject to request)
- Game viewing – varied biomes support diverse wildlife...lion, leopard, spotted hyaena, cheetah, wild dog, giraffe, buffalo, lechwe, zebra, tsessebe, impala, elephant...and great birding
- Power – 100% solar

Figures

1. Available to book on inventory and added to the published Rates Sheets.
2. Opening Special - discount of 15% on the nightly rate between 1 December 2017 and 31 March 2018.
3. Standard Wilderness Safaris rates/rate seasons apply from 1 April 2018.
4. Fully Inclusive rate basis as per other Botswana camps.
5. Children – per standard Wilderness Safaris policy.
6. Now added to all collateral and platforms – Wilderness Safaris website, Wetu, etc. Current images focus on the wildlife and area with camp images to follow in due course.

ADJUSTED | Pilot/Guide Room Rates from 2018

Valid from 11 January 2018, the pilot/guide rates at all Wilderness Safaris camps have been adjusted and standardised across board according to currency quoted:

- Namibia & Rocktail in South Africa = NAD/ZAR 1000.00 nett per person, per night
- Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia = US\$ 100.00 nett per person, per night.

Note that the pilot/guide/escort (staff) accommodation available at most of our camps/lodges is not of the same standard as guest tents and certain caveats apply:

- Bookings in pilot/guide accommodation at the above rates do not guarantee the occupant automatic participation in guest activities.
- Guides and escorts may share with other guides and escorts (unless specified otherwise and costed accordingly), while per standard aviation practice, all pilots require single accommodation.
- The nightly rates for staff accommodation are per person, per bed, and not per room. For guaranteed single room use, double rates will apply.

- The standard staff rate includes accommodation, all meals, park fees, laundry and all local drinks where applicable (premium imported brands and champagne excluded).

REMINDER

Delays on Arrival & Departure in Windhoek

Delays continue to be experienced at Hosea Kutako International Airport (Windhoek) due to an increase in flights to and from the destination. Inadequate capacity at this time to cope with the necessary immigration, security checks and baggage handling is having a knock-on effect with connections to and from our Wilderness Air Namibia flights and scheduled commercial air. Please allow for sufficient connection times when booking an itinerary, and if feasible, consider an overnight in Windhoek to minimise frustration, queues, missed arrangements, etc.

Botswana Birth Certificate Requirement for Botswana

Further to mention in the product updates of November 2016 and July 2015, Botswana Immigration are enforcing similar regulations to South Africa, applicable to all minors entering and exiting Botswana. This is required because of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, where it states that every member country that has acceded to or signed it should introduce some measures of control. The Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs Tourism advised: *"Effective from the 1st October 2016 minors (children under 18) traveling through the country's borders will be required to produce certified copies of unabridged birth certificates in addition to their valid passports. In the event that one parent is not traveling with the child, the other parent's affidavit consenting to such travel should be availed. However an affidavit will not be required if the father's name does not appear on the child's birth certificate."*

- An unabridged birth certificate is described as a document detailing the certificate number, name of the child, sex, date of birth, names of both parents, and country of birth for both the parents and the child.
- Note too that documents such as affidavits that are older than 6 months at the time of travel will not be valid.

Passport & Visa Requirements

Our After Hours and Customer Care services have noticed an increase in guests travelling with incorrect documentation. The onus does lie with the guests to carry all relevant and correct documentation, however, as a reminder:

- Ensure the passport is valid for at least 6 months after the return date of travel.
- The passport must have enough blank pages in the passport for the necessary immigration stamps and visas per the itinerary.
- Guests must check if visas are required. If yes, then determine whether it is obtainable on arrival at the port of entry, online or must be obtained prior to travel, allowing sufficient time to arrange the necessary.
- Be aware of the costs for visas issued on arrival and carry the relevant cash in case card machines are unavailable or offline.
- Keep passports, visas, birth certificates, affidavits, etc. with them at all times plus carry copies of key documents – either printed or in electronic format.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of travel with Wilderness Safaris that guests have travel insurance. Should they not have insurance cover, they will be personally responsible for any costs incurred due to a medical emergency or evacuation, as well as any other insurance claim situation such as loss of luggage or curtailment of arrangements.

RATES

2019 Rates Now Available

Our new-look 2019 Rate Sheets for Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe plus the Recommended Selling Price Sheets are now available on the Wilderness Window. Rocktail Camp will follow shortly, while the Rates Sheets for Explorations, Kenya, Rwanda and Seychelles will follow at a later stage, as these 2019 rates have not yet been finalised.

Rates Sheet Updates

- Qorokwe Camp added to the Botswana and Recommended Selling Price sheets for 2017 & 2018.
- The ballooning excursion on the Vumbura concession added to 2018 Botswana Rates Sheet.
- The child policy updated in terms of the Abu walking activity in the 2018 & 2019 Botswana Rates Sheets.

TRAVEL REGULATIONS

Mozambique Visas: Cheaper, Faster, Simpler

- Visitors from all countries may now purchase visas on arrival at all of Mozambique's 26 international border posts, including ports and airports. Previously, travellers from countries where Mozambique had Embassies, High Commissions or Consulates had to purchase a single-entry visa in advance of travel.
- The government also plans to reduce the price of the visa from US\$70.00 to US\$50.00 (value paid in Rands or Meticals will fluctuate with the prevailing exchange rate. SADC passport holders do not require visas to enter Mozambique and will receive a 30-day entry stamp on arrival at no charge.
- Visitors must hold a return air ticket as well as a confirmed hotel reservation, while those staying with friends or family require a 'Termo de Responsabilidade' (notarised Letter of Responsibility) from the host.

PRIVATE JOURNEYS – CAPE

NOW LIVE | Wilderness Safaris Private Journeys Website

Created as a useful tool to promote our touring offering in the Cape, the new Wilderness Safaris Private Journeys website is now live! Access it directly <https://www.ws-private-journeys.com/> or via the Info Centre, Wilderness Product, Links.

WILDERNESS TOURING & TRANSFERS – ZAMBEZI

Park Fee Increase for Helicopters in Victoria Falls

Settled direct by guests, the park fee for helicopter excursions in Victoria Falls increased this month from US\$ 12.00 per person to US\$ 15.00 per person.

Low Water Rafting Season Has Begun

The new Zambezi low water rafting season commenced on 3 August 2017.

WILDERNESS AIR

UPDATE | Wilderness Air Botswana Circuit

The following third party airstrips may now be booked as part of the Wilderness Air Botswana Circuit:

- Banoka Airstrip for Sable Valley and Hyena Pan Tented Camp
- Gorokwe for Qorokwe and Gomoti Plains

Sole Use Charters in Botswana – Only Airvans & Caravans

Note that C206s are no longer available for sole use charters going forward. All new quotes or bookings for sole use charters with Wilderness Air Botswana will only be on Airvans or C208 Caravans. Existing bookings on C206s will be honoured.

BOTSWANA

Kings Pool Maintenance

Where possible, and without moving any bookings, we have closed one room at Kings Pool on various dates between now and 7 October 2017 to carry out general maintenance in all guest units. From 13 to 20 January 2018 inclusive, we have closed the camp completely to carry out maintenance on the main area floor.

Water Activity Update

- **Xigera:** Water levels are dropping quickly. Boating is still possible to Xigera lagoon and the hippo pool, however, this may not be for much longer. Mokoro excursions are still very good and unaffected.
- **Abu and Seba:** Abu are about to move the boats to a deeper channel which is further from camp and we anticipate boating to cease in early September at the rate the water levels are falling. Mekoro are still fine.
- **Jao Concession:** All camps are currently still offering water activities. However water levels are dropping, so guests will be transferred as necessary by vehicle between camps and areas with enough water where boats will be situated. Parts of the channel between Hunda Island (the Tubu camps) and Jao are becoming quite shallow so they will cease boating here in the near future.
- **Vumbura Concession:** Boats and vehicles have been moved to the old Little Vumbura boat station. This means a three to five minute boat transfer between camp and the boat station and a longer 45-minute road transfer between the boat station and the airstrip (depending on sightings along the way).
- **Savuti:** The Savuti channel is currently flowing although we do not know how long this will continue. We are currently doing a boat cruise for Savuti guests (six seater boat) close to Zibalianja lagoon which is roughly two hours' drive from camp.

NAMIBIA

Fat Bikes at Kulala Desert Lodge Launched

E-powered Fat Bikes, with their "fat" tyres and an electric hub motor, are a fun and easy way to explore the Kulala concession. The electric bicycles are environmentally friendly – using solar power to re-charge – and best of all, designed and assembled in Namibia, by Namibians, and for Namibian conditions. Exclusive to guests staying at Kulala Desert Lodge, feedback from guests who participated in test runs was very positive.

- The cost is NAD/ZAR 300 per person. Excursions are booked and paid for directly in camp.
- Most routes are 2 to 3 hours long, while one is close to 4 hours.
- There is no upper or lower age limit but due to the size and weight of the bike, a minimum height requirement of 1.5 metres applies.

Boating at Serra Cafema not Available

The river level is too low for safe boat excursions so this activity is currently not available. Please ensure ALL bookings travelling to Serra Cafema over the next five months are advised. We will advise should the situation change.

RWANDA

Regulations in Relation to the East African Visa

Travellers have experienced issues over the last few weeks regarding the East African visa. It is important to note the following:

- The East Africa Tourist visa costs US\$ 100.00 (subject to change without prior notification) and is valid for multiple entry into the Republics of Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, and allows for easy movement between these three countries.
- Should guests apply for this East Africa Tourist visa and enter Tanzania or any other country that is not a signatory of this visa, then said visa would no longer be valid for use to regain entry into either Kenya, Uganda or Rwanda.
- Note that the issuing country for the East African visa has to be the first point of entry. For example - if applying for it through the Consulate of Kenya, then Kenya should be the first destination of arrival in East Africa.

SEYCHELLES

North Island Portal linked to Window

Either use the link on the Wilderness Window - Info Centre, Links, North Island - or go direct to the portal <http://www.north-island.com/north-island-portal/> to access rack rates, specials and property facts/information.

SOUTH AFRICA – ROCKTAIL CAMP

New Levy for Lake Sibaya in 2017, plus Activity costs for 2018

- With immediate effect, and for the rest of 2017, all guests taking part on a Lake Sibaya trip from Rocktail Camp will be charged R40.00 per person as a community levy. This levy is payable directly in camp, which in turn will be paid over to the Mabibi Community Trust (on whose land Lake Sibaya is situated).
- With effect from 11 January 2018, excursions to Lake Sibaya will no longer be an inclusive activity on the nightly rate. The cost will be R200.00 per guest, minimum of two guests and will include the levy mentioned above. Costs will also apply to the Village Tour - R250.00 per person.

Shuttle vs Private Transfers

Our complimentary shuttles are at the below times - any transfers outside these times are private transfers and guests will be charged for accordingly:

- From Coastal Cashews to the camp at 10:30, 13:00 and 15:00 daily.
- From the camp to Coastal Cashews at 09:30, 12:00 and 14:00 daily.

ZIMBABWE

Little Ruckomechi Opens Early in 2018

The good news is that we will be opening Little Ruckomechi from 1 May in 2018, instead of 1 June as we did this year. Ruckomechi opens as normal from 1 April 2018.

Davison's Room Refurb – Ongoing

Where possible, and without affecting bookings, one room has been closed at Davison's on various dates through September and October 2017 to complete a room refurb. New interior tents are being installed while the existing exterior flysheet and shade net remain. Floors will be resurfaced and some new softs, furniture and fittings added.

AIRLINES & AIRPORTS

Air France to Resume Nairobi flights

From March 2018, Air France plan to relaunch their Nairobi route. The French carrier, which last served Nairobi in March 2000, will operate three weekly flights, using a Boeing 787-9 aircraft.

Cheers

Tina

Wilderness Product Manager



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