



13 December 2016

## NEWSFLASH

### Lower Wilderness Air Zimbabwe Rates in 2017

Good news! We have repriced our flying in Zimbabwe to be more competitive and introduced more flexibility. Although the 35% discount on a minimum 3 nights at Wilderness will fall away, the new rates are close to what the discounted rates would have been.

- Lower flying rates come into effect on 1 March 2017!
- There are fewer restrictions - no minimum stay is required at a Wilderness camp, and seat rates may be booked for Wilderness and third party combinations of any duration.
- The new rates are available on the Window and our published Zimbabwe Rates Sheets.
- We will honour existing bookings and quotes utilising the 35% discount if confirmed by 15 December.
- Be aware that if there are NO Wilderness Zimbabwe properties in the itinerary, then sole use charters is the only option.
- Current 2016 and 2017 rates remain in place until 28 February 2017, with the existing 35% discount as published: *A discount of 35% is applicable to all flights on the Wilderness Air Zimbabwe circuit as long as the itinerary has a minimum of 3 consecutive nights booked at the same Wilderness camp (Davison's, Little Makalolo, Linkwasha, Ruckomechi, Little Ruckomechi). If you are flying between any of the Wilderness camps (minimum 3 night stay) and Kariba, the same discount will apply - although no minimum night stay is required at the Kariba properties (Changa, Bumi Hills, Musango, Rhino Lodge).*

### Linkwasha added to 2017/18 Early Bird Deal

We have added Linkwasha to next year's Early Bird deal – valid for travel between 1 October 2017 and 31 March 2018! Previously it was only Davison's and Little Makalolo in Hwange.

### UPDATE | Wilderness Air Namibia Revised Circuit

Last month's product update introduced changes to our Wilderness Air circuit in Namibia. One key element was as follows:

- The Cessna 406 used on the main circuit may not land at the Hoanib Airstrip. All guests travelling to and from Hoanib Skeleton Coast will therefore travel via the Doro Nawas hub and change onto a different aircraft i.e. the Caravan for the flight to Hoanib. These legs have therefore now been set up as separate sectors in inventory and rates.
- Due to the additional leg required to access Hoanib, the cost has increased if you combine Hoanib and Serra Cafema. **However, if you have an itinerary that includes BOTH Hoanib and Serra Cafema i.e. flying Doro Nawas/Hoanib Skeleton Coast/Doro Nawas/Serra Cafema/Doro Nawas, book it via the Wilderness Window to receive a 25% discount on all four flying legs.**

In addition, do note that while the new schedule is already live in Window Inventory, we agreed to honour existing bookings on the previous schedule up to and including 10 January 2017. Accordingly, actual flight departure and arrival times may vary over the next four weeks as we will consolidate flights where practical i.e. combining the old and new schedule to avoid inefficiencies.

## IMPORTANT

### Travel Regulations & Frustrations

- The status quo remains at this time regarding unabridged certificates although there is a possibility of discussions in the early part of 2017 between the relevant parties to review this.
- Home Affairs have made a commitment to increase their staff complement and extend shifts to address the long delays experienced recently at OR Tambo International, either collecting biometrics on arrival or clearing immigration.
- Please warn your clients about possible extortion from trolley operators at OR Tambo International Airport. There have been incidents of international passengers forced to pay between US\$ 70.00 and US\$100.00 to trolley operators for pushing their luggage. Passengers are encouraged to use only airport-accredited porters when they require assistance. They are identifiable with the bright orange uniform that clearly states the porter's name and operating number. "The Airport Security teams are co-operating fully with the airport-based government agencies entrusted with the management and/or removal of criminal elements," said Acsa, and incidents of this nature should be reported at the nearest iHelp desk or police station.

## REMINDER

### Long Stay Discount

Our long stay discount is available in off-peak periods (November to May) and is applicable to accommodation only in Botswana, Namibia and at Toka Leya in Zambia. It will apply to cross-country itineraries as long as the total minimum stay at Wilderness Safaris camps is 6 nights. Note there is no long stay discount in Zimbabwe, at the Kafue camps in Zambia and Rocktail Camp in South Africa.

## WILDERNESS TOURING

### ZAMBEZI FEATURED EXCURSION | Zambezi River Jetty Dinners

This different dining experience along the banks of the Zambezi River takes place approximately 6km from the centre of town. Guests transfer to the site by boat, on either one of the pontoons or the exclusive Ra-Ikane, before disembarking for a bonfire-lit dinner with traditional entertainment. Catered by Ilala Lodge's popular Palm Restaurant, the meal is prepared on site and both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages provided. Offered throughout the year, it is possible to have dinner on one of the boats in the rainy season. Pick up time from hotels and lodges in and around town is 18:30 in summer and 18:00 in winter. For even more fun, combine the dinner with a sunset cruise!

### NEW | Taxes Applicable to Helicopter Flights

With effect from 1 December 2016, a US\$ 6.00 passenger safety charge is applicable to all helicopter flights in Zambia. This tax is already in place for both international (US\$ 10.00 per person) and domestic flights (US\$ 5.00 per person). Implemented by the Zambian Civil Aviation Authority, the taxes on domestic flights (such as Wilderness Air flights to the Kafue) need to be paid in cash or by credit card at the airport, while the charge for the helicopter will be collected directly from the guest at the helipad.

### 2017 Rainbow Lunar Tours

Victoria Falls is one of a very limited number of sites around the world, known for the occurrence of 'moon bows'. Seen at night, the combination of the spray from the Falls and the full moon creates a lunar rainbow or moon bow. To assist with planning, herewith the dates for the 2017 Rainbow Lunar Tour and Lookout Café Full Moon dinner:

JANUARY 11, 12, 13  
FEBRUARY 10, 11, 12  
MARCH 11, 12, 13  
APRIL 10, 11, 12  
MAY 9, 10, 11  
JUNE 8, 9, 10  
JULY 8, 9, 10  
AUGUST 6, 7, 8  
SEPTEMBER 5, 6, 7  
OCTOBER 4, 5, 6  
NOVEMBER 3, 4, 5  
DECEMBER 2, 3, 4

## BOTSWANA

### Revised Elephant Experience at Abu Camp

Further to our recent communique and press release, most collateral has been updated to reflect that from the beginning of 2017, we will no longer offer elephant back riding at Abu (we are still working on some areas so please bear with us). The focus going forward will be:

- Walking with the Abu herd elephants
- Physically interacting with the herd
- Observing – or even participating in – activities such as mud bathing, training and veterinary care
- Learning more about elephant conservation, behaviour and care

### UPDATE | Vumbura Plains Refurb

As previously advised, we closed one room at both Vumbura Plains North and South camps over February, March and April 2017 to work on the floors, outside decks and lighting. This project has escalated (to include maintenance of the showers and wardrobes) requiring a further closure - specifically at South, now closed in inventory from 15 January to 1 February 2017 (inclusive). North remains operational over this period, with work to the rooms taking place around the existing closures.

## NAMIBIA

### The Himba at Serra Cafema

The Himba people are a group of semi-nomadic pastoralists who live in the Kaokoveld area. Continuing their traditional way of life, they move around according to weather, food and grazing patterns. When in the area, guests have the

opportunity to meet with the Himba and learn about their traditions, however, due to their nomadic lifestyle, note that we cannot guarantee this activity.

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

### **Fees applicable at Rocktail Camp**

- Settled directly in camp, a nominal iSimangaliso Park fee of ZAR 25.00 per adult and ZAR 15.00 per child (up to 12 years of age) per entry applies for all guests. Park fees are subject to change at Park Authorities discretion.
- A Community Conservation Levy of ZAR 5.00 per person applies and is payable direct in camp. Rates are subject to change without prior notice.
- For guests who self-drive to Rocktail Camp directly and do not require the scheduled transfers to/from Coastal Cashews, an additional ZAR 25.00 per vehicle per entry is payable directly at the camp. The vehicle fee does not apply to guests a) flying directly into the camp airstrip or b) those that fly into Richard's Bay Airport on a scheduled commercial flight and transfer to Coastal Cashews.

### **REMINDER | Important Information for Rocktail**

To ensure your guest has the best possible experience en route to and in camp itself, please note and/or provide the following:

- First and last names of guests, ages of children and any special requests – dietary, celebrations, medical, etc.
- Arrival & departure information – where are guests coming from and what are their onward arrangements.
- If on a self-drive basis, the mobile number of at least one of the guests. Ensure guests are aware of a) the distance involved b) that the National Park gate is open from 06:00 to 18:00 and c) have a copy of our detailed self-drive directions to hand.

## **AIRLINES & AIRPORTS**

### **Airlink Increases Frequencies on Various Routes**

- Airlink will add a third flight between Cape Town and Windhoek in February 2017. Departing Cape Town at 10:00, it will arrive Windhoek at 12:05 and the return will depart Windhoek at 15:00, arriving Cape Town at 17:05.
- From June 2017, Airlink will increase flight frequency between Cape Town and Maun, Botswana, offering a daily service.
- During 2017, Airlink will increase flight frequency between Nelspruit KMIA and Vilanculos, aiming for a daily service by August. Currently these flights are operational on Thursday and Sundays only.
- From April 2017, Airlink will increase flight frequency between Johannesburg and Vilanculos, Mozambique, offering a daily service.

### **Rwandair Plans Expansion**

There are good connections between Kigali and regional hubs like Nairobi, Entebbe, Addis and Johannesburg, while international access is through other airlines or some direct routes i.e. KLM from Amsterdam, Rwandair from Dubai, Turkish Airlines from Istanbul and so on. In 2017, the exciting news is that Rwandair plan to expand their routes to include the following:

- Gatwick – hopefully connecting the UK directly to Rwanda from March 2017
- New York – hopefully by late 2017
- Mumbai – at some stage in 2017

### **Air Seychelles plan Direct Durban Service**

Air Seychelles has announced a direct service to Durban from 30 March 2017, its second destination in South Africa after Johannesburg. The flight will operate twice weekly using an Airbus A320 in a two-cabin configuration.

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Best wishes for 2017! May it be a prosperous year for all.

Warm regards

Tina

## **Wilderness Product Manager**

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[www.wilderness-safaris.com](http://www.wilderness-safaris.com)

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