



23 February 2017

[TAKE NOTE | Gorilla Permits for Bisate in Rwanda](#)

[REVISED | Chitabe Closure for 2018](#)

[CHANGE | Coastal Excursion ex Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp](#)

[NEW | Zambia Passenger Safety Charge](#)

[Botswana Water Activity Update](#)

[Inspections at Kasane Airport](#)

[Hides & Sleep-Outs](#)

[Long Stay Discount](#)

[2017 Table Mountain Closure Dates](#)

[CAPE FEATURED EXCURSION | Full Day Peninsula and Shark Safari \(May to September\)](#)

[ZAMBEZI FEATURED EXCURSION | Half Day Fishing Trip](#)

[Children at Abu Camp](#)

[Helicopter Transfer to North Island - Zil Air Rates for 2017](#)

[New Vehicles & Transfer Options at Rocktail](#)

[Kenya Airways Launches Direct Flights to Vic Falls](#)

[Ethiopian Airlines Increases Flights to Johannesburg](#)

NEWSFLASH

TAKE NOTE | Gorilla Permits for Bisate in Rwanda

Please be aware of the following booking process with regard to gorilla permits for all guests travelling to Bisate:

- Permits are issued by the Tourism Office on receipt of payment only.
- They are limited to 80 per day, so subject to availability. We cannot guarantee gorilla trekking until the necessary permit/s have been purchased.
- The cost is US\$ 750 per person, per permit – quoted in addition to all land arrangements and must be paid for at time of confirmation. Invoices will be issued for a 20% deposit for Bisate plus the relevant gorilla permit costs.
- In order to secure a gorilla permit, receipt of payment PLUS copies of guest passports are required.
- Allowing for time delays in funds reflecting in the Thousand Hills Africa bank account, a copy of proof of payment is acceptable. Please forward this, along with copies of passports, to your Journey Specialist or Thousand Hills Africa as soon as possible. They will advise as soon as the permits have been arranged.
- If payment has been made for a permit, and THA have been unable to secure it, they will refund the relevant permit costs accordingly.

REVISED | Chitabe Closure for 2018

The product update of August 2016 advised that the rebuild of Chitabe Main Camp was postponed from 2017 to 2018 – January to April. Due to the scope and nature of work required for the Chitabe Main camp rebuild, the closure has been extended by a month. Instead of re-opening on 1 May 2018, this has changed to 1 June 2018.

CHANGE | Coastal Excursion ex Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp

Namibia is receiving some much-needed rain and while this is challenging for operations, it is most welcome as the country has been in the grips of a severe drought. At Hoanib in particular, the Hoanib River came down in flood last week and so for the time being, we will not be able to do the coastal excursion in the usual way i.e. drive one way and fly the other. Although the water will recede, it leaves behind mud 40cm to 1metre thick in the flood plains and we cannot traverse this by vehicle. Once this is dry enough for the vehicles to safely proceed to the coast, we will open the full excursion again. Rest assured that the experience at the coast remains exactly the same - just the driving part in the morning is suspended until further notice and replaced by flying.

NEW | Zambia Passenger Safety Charge

The Zambia Civil Aviation Authority (ZCAA) introduced a new Passenger Safety Charge in December 2016. Industry tried to fight it to no avail and it has now been implemented with immediate effect. Different to the other departure taxes paid in cash at the airport, this charge is included in the cost of the ticket/Wilderness Air service line and is applicable to each leg. Our rates have therefore been updated to reflect the following:

- US\$ 10 pp (international passenger safety charge) added to the Kasane/Livingstone and Livingstone/Kasane flights, over and above the existing Botswana taxes.
- US\$ 5.00 pp (domestic passenger safety charge) added to the Kafue/Livingstone and Livingstone/Kafue plus Lusaka/Kafue and Kafue/Lusaka flights – under Wilderness Air Zambia but operated by Staravia.

IMPORTANT

Botswana Water Activity Update

Quite a big flood is predicted for this year, which is expected to start pushing through in the second half of March. If the current good rains continue, we should be able to resume full water activities by the end of March/beginning of April, in all the camps that ordinarily offer water activities. At the moment, the situation is as follows:

- **DumaTau & Vumbura** – water-based activities continue as normal.
- **Kings Pool** – still no barge.
- **Xigera** – water levels have risen slightly, but not enough to allow for boating. Mokoro excursions are on offer from a station about 1 hour from camp.
- **Tabu & Little Tabu** – still no boating or mokoro excursions.
- **Kwetsani** – mekoro and limited boating.
- **Jacana** – mekoro and boating from camp.
- **Pelo** – closed until 1 March 2017.
- **Jao** – boating from the back of house jetty at camp, and guests are driven about 30 minutes to the mokoro station.
- **Abu and Seba** – still no boating nor mokoro excursions.

REMINDERS

Inspections at Kasane Airport

Due to an outbreak of a quarantine pest in various districts in Botswana, authorities are conducting inspections at Kasane International Airport and the border. Implemented on 16 January 2017 and in place until 5 January 2018, we have heard that some of the searches make guests uncomfortable. Please do ensure your clients aware of the situation, and Wilderness Air Botswana pilots plus Wilderness Air Zimbabwe drivers/guides will forewarn guests when arriving by air into Kasane or crossing the border by road into Botswana.

Hides & Sleep-Outs

Found on the Info Centre under Wilderness Product/Product Information/FAQs/Activities & Wildlife, handy reference tools have been compiled to assist you with queries regarding our hide and sleep-out options – how it works, costs involved, facilities available, etc. There is one for each country that offers this experience - Botswana, Kenya, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

Long Stay Discount

- The 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 applies to cross-country itineraries as long as the total minimum stay at Wilderness Safaris camps is 6 nights.
- Long stay discounts only apply to one consecutive booking that is booked through one office.
- There is no long stay discount in Zimbabwe, at the Kafue camps in Zambia and Rocktail Camp in South Africa.

WILDERNESS TOURING

2017 Table Mountain Closure Dates

The cableway will shut down for annual maintenance and renovation of facilities from Monday 24 July to Sunday 6 August 2017. It will open; weather permitting, on 7 August 2017.

CAPE FEATURED EXCURSION | Full Day Peninsula and Shark Safari (May to September)

Depart the city before daybreak for Simonstown harbour. Accompanied by international shark experts and experienced marine biologists, you board a boat in search of the ocean's elusive super-predator, the Great White Shark. False Bay is one of the few places in the world to witness the incredibly rare behaviour of sharks breaching (launching themselves out of the water) in pursuit of prey – most commonly Cape fur seals. One of their favourite haunts is Seal Island – home to some 60,000 seals and a host of sea birds. Focusing mainly on interaction with the sharks from the boat – with a view to observing natural predatory behaviour using a seal decoy – it is also possible to descend in a cage to view these super-predators underwater. Enjoy snacks and soft drinks on board before returning to port at around 12:30. We then head for the Peninsula, visiting Boulders Beach for another "creature close-up" with a colony of African penguins. After lunch, spot wildlife in the Table Mountain National Park, and explore the rocky coastline, the Cape fynbos vegetation and the south-westernmost point of Africa – Cape Point – and its lighthouse. The trip back to Cape Town travels through a number of small coastal towns on this dramatic coastline, with breath-taking vistas of both ocean and mountain.



ZAMBEZI FEATURED EXCURSION | Half Day Fishing Trip

Fish the mighty Zambezi River all year round for tiger, bream, nembwe and catfish – to mention just a few of the 75 known species found in the Zambezi River. Options include fly-fishing, spinning, trolling and drift bait or live bait fishing from a pontoon vessel that carries a maximum of eight passengers. Joe's Original Fishing Safaris is an "owner-run" operation. Each trip is run by either Joe himself or one of his experienced staff – all professional fishing guides. The excursion includes all fishing equipment bait, food and beverages and as big game and birdlife sightings are possible – bring a camera along.



BOTSWANA

Children at Abu Camp

Please be aware of the options available activity-wise for children at Abu:

- Minimum age requirement for mokoro excursions and walking is 13 years – this includes walking with the elephants.
- Children between 6 and 16 years of age may sleep on the outdoor star-deck provided an adult accompanies them.
- Private activities must be booked for children between the ages of 6 and 12 years. At Abu, this is specific to game drives and boating only as elephant activities cannot be booked on a private basis.
- Children between the ages of 6 and 16 years may be present at the feeding of the elephants.

SEYCHELLES

Helicopter Transfer to North Island - Zil Air Rates for 2017

The Zil Air 2017 rates are not yet finalised. The 2016 rates have been extended to 31 March 2017 and all bookings that confirm between now and then, for travel after 31 March, will be honoured on these rates.

SOUTH AFRICA

New Vehicles & Transfer Options at Rocktail

Rocktail Camp has acquired new camp vehicles for activities and one additional vehicle for long distance transfers. With two transfer vehicles now at their disposal Rocktail is, with immediate effect, introducing two new transfers in addition to the existing transfers:

- Rocktail Camp to King Shaka International Airport (Durban) and vv (**NEW**)
- Rocktail Camp to Phinda Airstrip and vv (**NEW**)
- Rocktail Camp to Richards Bay Airport and vv
- Rocktail Camp to Tembe Elephant Park and vv
- Rocktail Camp to Coastal Cashews and vv (private and scheduled)

Specific pick up and drop off points plus times apply, so please contact your Journey Specialist for details.

AIRLINES & AIRPORTS

Kenya Airways Launches Direct Flights to Vic Falls

From 18 May 2017, Kenya Airways will operate flights from Nairobi directly into Victoria Falls. Linked to the airline's existing services to Cape Town, the service will operate three times a week - on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Ethiopian Airlines Increases Flights to Johannesburg

From 28 March 2017, Ethiopian Airlines will operate twice-daily flights between Johannesburg and Addis Ababa. Currently the airline operates 11 flights a week from OR Tambo.

Cheers

Tina

Wilderness Product Manager



www.wilderness-safaris.com

© Wilderness-Safaris 2017