



25 January 2016

NEWSFLASH

Mombo Rebuild

In December, Keith Vincent (CEO) advised that the rebuild of Mombo and Little Mombo plus the opening of Mombo Trails had been delayed. Mombo was re-opened and all Mombo Trails bookings between 15 January and 31 July 2016 moved to Mombo accordingly. We are pleased to advise that despite this unexpected rebuild delay, the camps are looking good and the game is pumping! A variety of maintenance work has been or will be carried out over the next two months:

- Sand, repair, replace, treat all external decks in the main area as needed
- Sand, treat all internal decks in the main areas as needed
- Brush the thatch
- Replace the fire deck
- Add extra couches to lounge and new pool loungers
- Paint the pools
- Tension the roofs
- Sand, brace, repair, replace, treat the boardwalk in its entirety
- Do maintenance in all rooms, room by room
- Remove the old curio shop and the boardwalk to it
- Replace entrance stairs at Little Mombo

Current inventory is as follows:

- 15 January 2016 to 31 July 2016: 7 rooms at Mombo & 5 rooms at Little Mombo, Mombo Trails not open.
- 01 August 2016 to 01 April 2017: 8 rooms at Mombo & 4 rooms at Mombo Trails. Little Mombo closed.
- From 02 April 2017: 9 rooms at Mombo & 3 rooms at Little Mombo.

Rates in the Wilderness Window and Botswana NETT Rate Sheets have been updated, taking standard seasons into account:

- Mombo - valid 11 January 2016 to 10 January 2017 and INCLUDES a discount of 20%.
- Little Mombo - valid 11 January 2016 to 31 July 2016 and INCLUDES a discount of 20%.
- Mombo Trails - valid 1 August 2016 to 10 January 2017 and INCLUDES a discount of 40%.

A private vehicle is available to Mombo guests only between 15 January and 31 July 2016. Bookings at Little Mombo requiring a private vehicle over this period will need to book and pay for enough rooms (3) to secure sole use. From 01 August 2016 until 01 April 2017, there is no private vehicle available on the Mombo concession due to the limited number of vehicles and the configuration of the camps - 8 rooms at Mombo and 4 rooms at Mombo Trails. Bookings requiring a private vehicle over this period, will need to book and pay for enough rooms (3) to secure sole use.

As before, there will be only 1 pilot/guide room (2 beds) between Mombo and Little Mombo from 15 January to 31 July 2016. Note that during this time, the existing pilot/guide room at Mombo is being utilised as one of the 5 rooms at Little Mombo in the revised camp configuration. From 01 August 2016 to 01 April 2017, there will be pilot/guide accommodation at Mombo and Mombo Trails respectively - 1 room/2 beds at each. In all instances, the pilot/guide accommodation will be management units or alternatives back-of-house.

IMPORTANT

KAZA Visa

Further to a recent article stating that the KAZA Visa will be expanded to include Angola, Botswana and Namibia, and that Zambia and Zimbabwe will once again issue the KAZA Visa at their respective borders, please be advised:

- We have no further details on the inclusion of Angola, Botswana and Namibia in this initiative, however, will keep you updated.
- **Zambia** - the KAZA Visa will continue in 2016, however, the exact date of the availability/reinstatement has still to be determined. Currently, Livingstone Airport plus the border posts at Kazungula and the Falls do not have KAZA Visa stocks. Normal visa applications and costs i.e. for single/double entry as relevant, will apply.

- **Zimbabwe** – the KAZA Visa will continue to be issued, however, they do not have the relevant stickers available in Zimbabwe either. They are hoping to have the stickers by the beginning of February but this is not definite. For the time being, guests will have to apply and pay for visas as before.

Sufficient Blank Pages in a Passport

As stipulated in our General Pre-Tour Information (which must be shared with all guests prior to travel), there must be enough blank visa pages (not endorsement pages) in a passport to accommodate all necessary visas and stamps. Each country we operate in generally requires at least 2 consecutive/side by side blank pages on entry. Should an itinerary include more than one country, excluding the country of departure and return, this must be taken into account i.e. a guest travelling to Botswana via South Africa requires a total of 4 blank pages in the passport. Insufficient blank pages may result in entry into or exit from a country being denied. This in turn results in delays, inconvenience, frustration, additional costs, etc. Airlines are liable for transporting someone whose travel documents do not meet immigration requirements, so they are becoming much stricter and will deny boarding too.

No Clarity yet on Unabridged Birth Certificates

Announced in October 2015, the revised visa rules are unlikely to come into effect before the end of January. The Department of Home Affairs has said it requires time to effect the changes – one of which stipulates that “inbound tourists travelling with minors will no longer be ‘required’ to produce an unabridged birth certificate, but will be ‘strongly advised’ to have the document”. Until we have clarity on this, the status quo remains and all guests must travel with the relevant documentation to avoid inconvenience.

Travellers to SA must have Machine Readable Travel Documents

In compliance with regulation 2(1)(a) of the Immigration Regulations 2014, the Department of Home Affairs has stated that only Machine-readable Travel Documents (MRTD) are accepted on entry to South Africa. In the case of a bona fide emergency, travellers are allowed to use Emergency Travel Documents to enter and depart from South Africa, however this is the exception.

Yellow Fever Update

Official notification has finally been received advising that travellers going to or coming from Zambia and Rwanda will no longer be required to produce a yellow fever vaccination certificate upon arrival in South Africa. If travelling from the listed countries, yellow fever certificates are still required for entry into South Africa. Please contact your Journey Specialist for further details.

REMINDERS

Agent WISH

As of 1 February 2016, Agent WISH in its current format will no longer exist. The Wilderness Window has been in operation for more than 18 months and has proven to be a worthwhile successor to the previous, outdated platform. Going forward, the Wilderness Window will be our sole online source for information, including camp availability. Many of you are already making use of the facilities on the Window including the Info Centre, however, if you do not have the necessary login details and password, or require training with regards to accessing camp availability via the Window, please let your Reservations or Sales Manager know and they will assist accordingly.

Wilderness FIT VS Groups Cancellation Policy

The Wilderness cancellation policy that appears in the General Information Manual and elsewhere, is applicable to FIT bookings at Wilderness product only. Wilderness Safaris Groups, Series and Incentives; Wilderness Collection product in Kenya; Wilderness Touring ground handlers in Cape Town, Livingstone and Victoria Falls; as well as all Associated Product suppliers all have different cancellation fee policies. For Groups in particular, the cancellation policy is specific to each and every program. Please ensure these details are requested/provided prior to confirmation.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Although Wilderness Safaris has an Emergency Evacuation Policy in place (see page 112 of our Agent Manual and page 15 of the General Information Manual for further details), guests still need to carry their own comprehensive travel and medical insurance. In the event of an incident, the Wilderness Safaris underwriters will seek reimbursement for all costs incurred – which will either be from the guest’s travel insurance company or if they have no insurance, from the guest directly.

PACKAGES & SPECIALS

Wings over Namibia & Spirit of Namibia 2016

Updated flyers for both the Wings over Namibia and Spirit of Namibia programmes are now available on the Info Centre. Note that our Wings over Namibia programme will continue as is for 2016 with the inclusion of Ongava – both the itinerary (2 nights at Little Kulala, 2 nights at Damaraland Camp & 2 nights Ongava Lodge OR Ongava Tented Camp) and the published rate remain the same.

WILDERNESS TOURING

Zambezi Updates

- Due to rising water levels, the Devil's Pool on the edge of the Victoria Falls will close shortly.
- Please contact your Journey Specialist if you require the dates for the Lunar Rainbow in 2016.
- Wild Horizons have added set departures to their multi-day rafting trips in 2016. Between two and five days long, there are perfect for solo travellers or smaller groups. Guests experience roaring rapids in the midst of narrow canyons and broad valleys with white sandy beaches – where camps is set up and hearty dinners are enjoyed around roaring campfires with new friends. Guides accompany guests through the rapids on these self-supported expeditions and explain the geology and fascinating history of this area.

ZAMBEZI FEATURED EXCURSION | The Boma – Place of Eating

The Boma in Victoria Falls is a unique experience where the cuisine includes a variety of game meats and traditional Zimbabwean dishes, plus there is a variety of entertainment on offer to celebrate the people and cultures of Zimbabwe with traditional dancers, drumming, a Sangoma (storyteller) and a local witchdoctor (fortune telling). Complimentary hair braiding (up to three braids) and face painting all add to the fun!

Cape Town Update

On 15 April 2016, The Flagship will close for business. "At the end of 2015 Chef Bruce was tragically taken from us all too soon. Duncan stepped in and made his own mark, keeping The Flagship flying. Every story has an end and now as 2016 greets us, the property has been sold and we believe that it is time to close a very special chapter." Bookings remain open until then, however, alternatives will be found for any bookings from 16 April 2016. Our Private Full Day Peninsula Tour with lunch at The Flagship will be discontinued from 16 April 2016.

CAPE FEATURED EXCURSION | Private Full Day Winelands & Cycling

For a different and more active visit to the winelands, cycle through the beautiful countryside, stopping for wine tasting at some of the historic estates and enjoying lunch at one of the excellent local restaurants! Escorted by a cycling guide, the length of the ride (weather dependent) and routing will be tailor-made depending on guest preferences and fitness levels. Before returning to the hotel, there is an opportunity to visit the beautifully preserved Cape Dutch architecture, museums, galleries and shops of the Winelands.

BOTSWANA

Availability at Jacana Camp

Should you have any last-minute requests, especially on Six Countries, Jacana is now open from 01 February 2016 (previously closed between 01 February and 06 March). Great comments about Jacana on TripAdvisor include:

- "Of the 4 camps we visited this was without doubt the most charming"
- "This is a very relaxing and beautiful camp on the Delta. Heaven to just sit and watch the water, birds, hippo, elephant and otter family frolicking in the water"
- "The staff in the camp were gracious, helpful and entertaining. A wonderful experience from start to finish"
- "Great camp, great break"
- "...found the water based activities and quality of accommodation and hospitality at Jacana a welcome respite"

NAMIBIA

Rhino Tracking Protocol

- Rhino tracking is not possible on a private basis regardless of whether a private vehicle and guide is booked. "Save the Rhino Trust" (SRT) regulations stipulate that rhino tracking on foot, is on a shared basis in a group. Private activities only guarantee a private game drive.
- There are no minimum or maximum guest numbers required to do the tracking although the minimum age restriction is 16 years.
- The SRT trackers provide a full orientation in camp the night prior to the daily scheduled morning departure the following day, and it is imperative that their guidelines are observed at all times.
- Stays of 1 night are not recommended as rhino tracking is available only once a day, with departure early in the morning, and the activity duration is dependent on distances covered by the rhino and the tracking thereof.

Guided Nature Walks at Damaraland Camp

For those active guests interested in walking, the Damarana and Shepherd's Trail are two great options available at Damaraland – contact your Journey Specialist for details.

Ongava Closure Dates

Ongava Reserve have revised their camp closure dates to the following:

- Ongava Tented Camp is closed from 11 to 20 February 2016 inclusive for solar electrification installation
- Little Ongava (renovation project) and Ongava Lodge (construction of photographic hide) are both closed from 21 February to 06 March 2016 inclusive

SOUTH AFRICA

Access to Rocktail Camp

All arrangements – whether by road or air – must fit in with a) the transfer details listed below and b) the hours of the national park gate operation.

- The Manzungwenya access gate into the reserve is only open between 06:00 and 18:00. It is NOT possible to gain access to the reserve outside of these hours – for either entry or departure.
- Guests travelling in 2x4 vehicles must make use of our scheduled transfers to/from camp, utilising Coastal Cashews as the pick-up and drop-off point (where parking is at guests' own risk). There is no extra charge if scheduled transfers are booked in advance although private transfer charges will apply if they are not.
- The scheduled transfer times are as follows:
 - From Coastal Cashews to Rocktail Camp: 10:30, 13:00 and 15:00 daily.
 - From Rocktail Camp to Coastal Cashews: 09:30, 13:00 and 15:00 daily.
- Guests travelling in their own 4x4 vehicles may drive directly to the lodge, bearing in mind the strict gate times.
- The drive between Coastal Cashews and the camp is about 40 minutes.
- Please provide guest contact numbers plus arrival/departure details and times prior to travel.
- Should guests opt to fly in, the road transfer between the camp and the Manzungwenya Airstrip is complimentary and is about 10 minutes one way.

ZAMBIA

New Passenger Safety Tax in Zambia

We previously advised that Zambian Civil Aviation Authority were implementing a new tax from 1 January 2016 - US\$ 10.00 per person for International and US\$ 5.00 per person for domestic. Taxes are usually settled direct on charter flights (private and circuit), and normally included in the ticket price of a scheduled commercial flight. However, some local airlines and ticketing agents do not appear to have received this notification yet, so it is possible that for the moment, passengers will need to pay this new tax directly at the airport.

ZIMBABWE

Underneath Trading (Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe)

Some time ago, we changed the name of Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe to Underneath Trading. There were financial reasons for this related to bank accounts, etc. Consequently, Underneath Trading is the name that appears on vouchers, service lines for quotes and in itineraries. Please rest assured that this relates to the financial transaction side of the business only, and as far as branding of vehicles, uniforms, meet & greet boards, collateral in camp, etc. is concerned, the only name that will appear is Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe.

Warm regards,
Tina

Wilderness Product Manager

www.wilderness-safaris.com

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