



24 November 2016

## NEWSFLASH

### IMPORTANT | Revised Wilderness Air Namibia Flying Circuit

In an ongoing effort to improve our flying service to the destinations we operate in Namibia, we have reviewed and updated our schedule with immediate effect. These revisions include:

- Time changes where relevant due to the introduction of the faster twin-engine Cessna 406 aircraft on the main circuit, plus accommodating the changes listed below.
- Additional flights between Windhoek and Kulala, and introducing new flights between Windhoek International and Eros Airport (to avoid road transfers).
- Discontinued flights between Doro Nawas, Hoanib and Serra Cafema due to a key change to Hoanib Skeleton Coast access. The Cessna 406 may not land at the Hoanib Airstrip, so all guests travelling to and from Hoanib Skeleton Coast will now travel via the Doro Nawas hub and change onto a different aircraft for the flight to Hoanib. This affects the connection with Serra Cafema in particular - an example of the new routing would be Doro Nawas/Hoanib/Doro Nawas/Serra Cafema/Doro Nawas. These legs have been set up as separate sectors for booking and there is a cost associated with the additional flights required. We will honour the rates for all existing CONFIRMED bookings on this specific route. Please confirm all PROVISIONAL bookings by Friday 9 December 2016 or the revised rate applies.
- No change to the Doro Nawas/Damaraland routes (am and pm) so all bookings on these flights remain as is.

We will honour existing bookings per the previous schedule travelling up to and including 10 January 2017. All bookings travelling from 11 January 2017 (both existing and new) will be booked on the new schedule. The new circuit is live in our inventory and the updated Nett Namibia Rates Sheets for 2016, 2017 and 2018 are available online for details of the new circuit routes, times and rates.

### Photographic Vehicle at Mombo, New Vehicles at Kings Pool & Monopods for Premier camps

Mombo now has a dedicated photographic vehicle, suitable for TWO guests only (image on the left). Subject to availability and the standard private vehicle rate, please specify your requirement when making a booking. Note that the photographic vehicle is NOT in addition to the existing private vehicle on the Mombo concession – we remain restricted on the number of vehicles by concession regulations.

Furthermore, all vehicles at Mombo and Kings Pool (new ones arrived in the Linyanti recently – image on the right) will now have monopods for guests to use to rest/stabilize their camera (one per vehicle as the norm and two in the Mombo photographic vehicle). The monopod allows guests to adjust the height and angle required to get that perfect shot – the flexibility providing a great advantage over fixed camera mounts! Vumbura Plains will continue to make use of bean bags, however, if the feedback on the monopods is positive, more will be purchased.



### UPDATE | Serra Cafema

Earlier this year, in anticipation of a planned “revamp” of Serra Cafema in Namibia, we stopped taking new bookings between 6 December 2016 and 30 April 2017. As plans are not yet finalised, we are pleased to advise that we have reopened the camp on the following basis:

- All eight rooms from 6 December 2016 up to and including 23 January 2017.
- Five rooms only from 24 January 2017 up to and including 30 April 2017. During this period, three rooms (including the family), will remain closed. We will honour existing bookings in excess of five rooms between 24 January and 30 April 2017.
- New bookings with children 16 years and younger will need to be accommodated as follows – child sharing with adult in a twin OR on confirmation from Operations first, in a triple.
- There is no change to the pilot/guide accommodation.

## IMPORTANT

### Further Bans - Samsung Galaxy Note 7

The Botswana Civil Aviation Authority have banned the Samsung Galaxy Note 7 on all flights originating from or arriving in Botswana, including light aircraft, and it may not be carried as cargo, hold baggage, cabin baggage or any other means. Wilderness Air must comply and will not allow these devices on board any of our aircraft. Anyone caught trying to circumvent this ruling will be denied boarding and be liable for criminal prosecution.

## REMINDER

### Festive Season Hours

Please note the following trading hours over the forthcoming festive season for the Wilderness Safaris Travel Shops:

#### South Africa

- Thursday 24 November – Cape Town offices closed from 12:00 for end of year company function
- Friday 2 December – Johannesburg offices closed from 12:00 for end of year company function
- Friday 16 December – Day of Reconciliation...a limited reservations service will be available, other departments will be closed
- Friday 23 December – Closed from 13:00 for Christmas weekend
- Monday 26 December – Closed for the Day of Goodwill (Boxing Day)
- Tuesday 27 December – Closed per special concession made by government
- Friday 30 December – Closed from 13:00 for New Year's weekend
- Monday 2 January 2017 – Closed for New Year's Day, carried over from Sunday the 1st

The Wilderness Emergency After Hours Service will provide assistance with any **emergencies** over this period. Mobile/cell: +27 82 576 9173 Email: [WSAfterHours@wilderness.co.za](mailto:WSAfterHours@wilderness.co.za).

#### Botswana

- Friday 23 December – Closed from 13:00 for Christmas weekend
- Monday 26 December – Closed for the Day of Goodwill (Boxing Day)
- Tuesday 27 December – Closed per special concession made by the government
- Friday 30 December – Closed from 13:00 for New Year's weekend

#### Namibia

- Friday 25 November – Windhoek office closed from 13:30 for end of year company function
- Monday 26 December – Closed for the Day of Goodwill (Boxing Day)

#### Zambezi Travel Shop

- Thursday 22 December – Closed for Unity Day
- Friday 23 December – Closed from 13:00 for Christmas weekend
- Monday 26 December – Closed for the Day of Goodwill (Boxing Day)
- Tuesday 27 December – Closed per special concession made by government
- Friday 30 December – Closed from 13:00 for New Year's weekend
- Monday 2 January 2017 – Closed for New Year's Day, carried over from Sunday the 1st

## TRAVEL REGULATIONS

### KAZA Univisa Between Zimbabwe & Zambia Set to Resume?

The KAZA Univisa between Zimbabwe and Zambia is expected to be implemented shortly and awaits only the signatures of the two countries' Home Affairs departments. According to Zimbabwe's immigration department, 50 000 visa stickers have been shared between Zimbabwe and Zambia and are already at the ports of entry.

### Botswana Birth Certificate Requirement

This is not a new requirement - mention was in the External Product Update of July 2015. The recent announcement by the government was to re-educate members of the public as it is now being enforced. 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. An unabridged birth certificate is described as being 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.

## RATES UPDATES

### 2018 Rates Now Available

Our Nett 2018 rates from 1 June 2018 to 10 January 2019 for Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe are now available online, as well as the Recommended Selling Rate sheet.

## WILDERNESS AIR

### Seat Rates vs Sole Use vs Private Charters

Note that within the Wilderness Air operation, the following are the only options available in the respective countries - all sole use or private charters will be outsourced to/booked directly with the relevant third party operator as relevant:

- Namibia – Seat Rates only. No Sole Use or Private Charters
- Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe – Seat Rates and Sole Use. No Private Charters

## WILDERNESS TOURING

### Festive Season Tips for Cape Town

- Table Mountain has released early bird tickets for peak season allowing visitors to go up the cable car between 07:30 – 08:00 in the morning. It is an additional cost but well worth it to avoid standing in the queue for hours.
- Our Peninsula Tours over December and January will begin between 07:30 and 08:00. This is due to extremely long queues at Table Mountain and the entrance into Cape Point. As normal, our guides will contact the guests the day prior to reconfirm the pick-up time and to answer any questions/discuss the touring.
- Half day touring will not be on offer between 19 December 2016 and 6 January 2017, as we do not have the capacity over and above all the full day touring already booked.

### Changes at the Test Kitchen

While we will assist where possible, please be aware that making bookings at the Test Kitchen have become quite a challenge. They have a) reduced the number of seats from 65 to 40, b) no longer have a lunch sitting, only dinner and c) booking sheets are only open one month prior to the reservation date e.g. if you want a booking for June you can only book it on 1 May when the sheets open.

### CAPE FEATURED EXCURSION | Private Full Day Peninsula Tour with Helicopter

Departing from the helipad at the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, this helicopter excursion offers spectacular views of Table Bay and Robben Island before heading past the Twelve Apostles towards Hout Bay, Chapman's Peak and the vast sweep of Noordhoek beach. Next up is the beautiful coastline leading to the Cape of Good, where you can admire the rocky outcrop of Cape Point, the most south western tip of Africa. The helicopter touches down on the False Bay coast, on the east side of the Peninsula, where your guide will meet you and take you to see the colony of charismatic African penguins at Boulders Beach. Next, head to Table Mountain National Park with its unique Cape fynbos vegetation and home to birds like African black oystercatchers and Cape sugarbirds as well as to very special fauna including Cape mountain zebra, bontebok (both endemic) and the charismatic Cape baboon. Climb (or ride the world's first environmentally friendly funicular as an optional extra) to Cape Point Lighthouse to capture the magical vistas of False Bay before enjoying lunch overlooking the bay. On our return journey back to Cape Town we navigate the 114 curves of 600m high Chapman's Peak Drive, one of the world's most spectacular passes, with a chance of seeing Southern right whales just offshore from June to November! (Routing may change according to helicopter landing site).

## BOTSWANA

### Water Activity Update – Levels Continue to Drop in Some Areas

- **DumaTau & Vumbura** – no change, water-based activities continue as normal.
- **Xigera** – Water levels have dropped very fast so we have stopped boating. We are still able to do mokoro activities, departing from a different mokoro station an hours' drive from camp.
- **Tabu & Little Tabu** – Due to extremely low water levels, there are no boating or mokoro excursions.
- **Kwetsani** - Guests will be driven from camp to departure points closer to Jao for boating and mokoro excursions.
- **Jacana** – Still offering mokoro activities from camp, however boating has moved to a deeper area.
- **Pelo** – Still offering mokoro activities and boating from camp, although levels are low.
- **Jao** – Guests will be driven from camp to departure points for both boating and mokoro excursions.

### Rebuild at Vumbura Plains – South Main Area Only

We have received requests for the "newly renovated" rooms at Vumbura Plains. Note that it was only the main area at Vumbura South that was rebuilt after the fire in June this year, However, in the first few months of 2017, the following will be undertaken in all rooms at both Vumbura Plains camps: maintenance to floors, outside decks and lighting.

### Little Vumbura – Work in 2016 & 2017

In October's update, I advised that Little Vumbura would be closed over two periods for some substantial work to be done to the rooms, main area and back of house (16 November to 16 December 2016 & 7 January to 15 March 2017). As part of this process, note that the low wooden walkways have been removed and we have reverted to sandy walkways on the ground.

## SEYCHELLES

### Zil Air Update

- The EC145 helicopter (max 6 passengers) is not available for any commercial flights between 11 November and mid-December 2016 due to a private operation.
- The 2017 Rates are not yet finalised so in the interim, we will quote 2016 rates. Should the booking confirm before Zil Air release their 2017 rates, the 2016 rates will be honoured.

## ZAMBIA

### REMINDER | Departure Taxes

Our collateral has reflected the following taxes since the beginning of the year, which included the passenger safety charge (scheduled for implementation January 2016). It appears this did not happen, and it will now come into effect from 1 December 2016:

- International Departure Tax: US\$ 30.00 per person
- International Security Tax: US\$ 5.00 per person
- International Airport Infrastructure & Development Tax: US\$ 10.00 per person
- **International Passenger Safety Charge: US\$ 10.00 per person**
- Domestic Departure Tax: US\$ 8.00 per person
- Domestic Security Tax: US\$ 3.00 per person
- Domestic Airport Infrastructure & Development Tax: US\$ 5.00 per person
- **Domestic Passenger Safety Charge: US\$ 5.00 per person**

## ZIMBABWE

### Small Denominations in Cash for Zimbabwe & Using Credit Cards

Due to a shortage of hard currency/physical US Dollars in Zimbabwe, receiving change for larger denominations could be a problem. It is advisable that clients travelling to Zimbabwe take small denominations only for payments where credit cards are not accepted or possible – such as activities, meals in restaurants, curio items and tipping. Guests may pay for their visas by credit card at Victoria Falls Airport, the Kazungula Border with Botswana and Victoria Falls Border with Zambia.

### No Sleep-out from Little Ruckomechi

Sleep-outs in Mana Pools are only possible from Ruckomechi Camp. Little Ruckomechi operates with only one guide and vehicle, and as a guide must "sleep-out" with all guests staying on the platform, we do not have the resources to offer this activity from the smaller camp. Remember too that all sleep-outs are weather dependent.

### Linkwasha Pizza Oven

A pizza oven has been built at Linkwasha and should be available to use in a couple of weeks once it has dried out. I suspect there will be some "pizza rivalry" going on between Linkwasha and Little Makalolo with their pizza oven at Madison Pan!!!

## AIRLINES & AIRPORTS

### Completion of Victoria Falls Airport & New Airline to Fly in

Officially commissioned by President Robert Mugabe on Friday 18 November 2016, the new Victoria Falls International Airport is now complete. The project entailed construction of a new international terminal building with the necessary passenger processing facilities, a new 4km runway and associated taxiways, a new air traffic control tower with associated equipment, a new fire station, sewer ponds and water reservoir. In addition, the old terminal building was refurbished and is now the domestic terminal. Expanded car parks can now accommodate the anticipated increased demand for parking space.

- Once guests are in the check-in queue, our drivers and guides may not join them.
- The first international airline to sign up for flights to Victoria Falls is Ethiopian Airways. The schedule will be Addis Ababa/Victoria Falls/Gaborone/Addis Ababa four times weekly, starting in March 2017. Although not yet confirmed, there is a possibility that Kenya Airways and RwandAir will also utilise this new hub.

### **Airlink Extends Lodge Access Network**

Commencing on 1 January 2017 and available to book now, SA Airlink have extended their Lowveld 'Lodge Link' safari lodge network. In partnership with &Beyond, the network will provide daily connections between &Beyond's Ngala properties in the Timbavati, Kirkman's Kamp in the Sabi Sand and the six lodges in &Beyond's Phinda Private Game Reserve. Travellers may connect from Cape Town and Johannesburg on Airlink to Nelspruit Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport or Skukuza Airport with a short transfer connecting guests onwards with Airlink's Lodge Link service direct to their safari destination, minimising lengthy road transfers.

### **New Routes for Air Namibia**

As of 30 October 2016, Air Namibia has introduced four flights per week linking Windhoek, Gaborone and Durban - on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

### **Lusaka Airport Completion Brought Forward**

The expansion of Kenneth Kaunda International Airport in Lusaka, Zambia, may be complete during 2017, ahead of schedule. Expansion to the airport will see passenger handling capacity increasing to six million and developments include two hotels, an office complex and a shopping mall.

### **Plans to Expand Maun Airport to Meet Passenger Demand**

Botswana's Civil Aviation Authority has unveiled plans to expand Maun International Airport, to accommodate the ever-increasing Maun passenger traffic and ease overcrowding at the terminal building. On award of the tender, construction will start. Expected to take four years, work will be restricted to the terminal building with a temporary terminal building scheduled to be operational in May 2017. Runway extensions were completed in 2012, with a new tower and technical wing completed in May this year.

### **Air Botswana Schedule Rationalisation**

As part of the airline's plans to enhance schedule integrity and improve customer experience without compromising the airline's commercial viability, Air Botswana terminated their Gaborone-Lusaka flights on 13 November and Gaborone-Harare flights on 12 November. The airline also reduced frequencies on the Gaborone-Kasane route, suspending the Monday flight from 14 November.

### **Air France to Fly Year-round to Cape Town**

With effect from 26 March 2017, Air France will offer year-round flights between Paris and Cape Town. Currently, the airline offers a seasonal, thrice-weekly service between the two cities.

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Warm regards,  
Tina

**Wilderness Product Manager**

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

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