



24 November 2017

NEWSFLASH

Stay 6 Pay 5 Deal – Additional Camps

Our Stay Pay deal just got better with the addition of five key Botswana camps for the summer season! Applicable for travel between 6 November 2017 and 31 March 2018, excluding the festive period of 20 December 2017 to 10 January 2018, book a total of six nights at any one or combination of the following camps and only pay for five:

- **NEW | Kalahari Plains, Little Vumbura, Vumbura Plains, Kwetsani Camp, Mombo Trails ***
- **EXISTING | Abu, DumaTau, Jacana, Jao, Kings Pool, Little Tubu, Tubu Tree, Seba, Savuti, Xigera, Toka Leya, Davison's, Little Makalolo, Linkwasha**

*Mombo Trails closes on 26 February 2018

Extra Private Vehicles at Chitabe Lediba during Rebuild

Between 11 January and 31 May 2018 when Chitabe Main camp is closed for the rebuild of the main area and boardwalks, two extra vehicles have been allocated to Chitabe Lediba – providing a total of three private vehicles over this period.

Doro Nawas Airstrip Re-Opens

Maintenance is complete and the Doro Nawas Airstrip will re-open ahead of schedule on Saturday 25 November 2017. Accordingly, our flying circuit will revert to using Doro Nawas as the hub.

Rwanda Visas now Available on Arrival for All

With effect from 1 January 2018, citizens of **all** countries will be able to obtain visas for a 30 day stay on arrival in Rwanda. Prior application will no longer be necessary.

IMPORTANT

NEW | Service Fee for Use of Wilderness Safaris Botswana Airstrips

Wilderness Safaris Botswana have implemented a mandatory service fee applicable to all Botswana based users of our airstrips. Effective 1 January 2018 for new bookings only, an amount of US\$ 15.00 pp (or US\$ 50.00 equivalent per aircraft) will be charged to all Botswana based air charter companies for all drop offs and collections at Wilderness Safaris Botswana airstrips. Wilderness Air Botswana have elected to absorb these costs so there is no change to their rates, however, other parties may adjust their rates accordingly. This fee aims to recoup some of the costs incurred by multiple airstrip transfers (many of which are more than an hour or two away in one direction), due to different landing times and because we do not wish to have guests waiting at the airstrips.

Temporary Closure of Mombo Airstrip

We will be closing the Mombo Airstrip on 17 January 2018 for necessary maintenance. We are hopeful the work will take 10 days, however this is subject to weather conditions. Guests will fly with Wilderness Air to the Xigera Airstrip, where they will board a 4-seater helicopter for a 10-minute scenic flight to Mombo – and the same in reverse (helicopter flight from Mombo to Xigera, for Wilderness Air flight and onward arrangements). Rates as quoted remain the same and Operations will manage this on the ground with Wilderness Air and Helicopter Horizons.

Desert Rhino Camp Airstrip Change

As of Tuesday 21 November 2017, the new runway (2002.11S 01350.35E) at Desert Rhino Camp is closed for maintenance. All aircraft must use the old runway (1958.37S 01350.02E) at Desert Rhino Camp from this date until further notice. Please advise relevant parties accordingly.

Elephant Related Activities in Victoria Falls & Livingstone

Be aware that in Victoria Falls, the Elephant Interaction activity is only being offered to groups, not FITS. For FITs, the available option is The Elephant Encounter. In Livingstone, it is still called Elephant Interaction and is available to both groups (on request) and FITs. On both sides of the Falls, operators are phasing out elephant back safaris (riding).

UPDATE | Cape Town Water Situation

There is still no change with severe water shortages continuing in the Western Cape area. Cape Town has announced that May 2018 will be 'Day Zero' for the drought, should water consumption not reduce. The city currently uses about 582 million litres a day, 82 million litres more than the daily target of 500 million litres a day. Per the CEO of Cape Town Tourism, "Potential tourists should know that the City of Cape Town and the Western Cape Provincial Government are doing everything in their power to mitigate the challenges faced by the ongoing drought in the region". Visitors are asked to be aware of the current water crisis facing the city and province and to adopt the approach launched by the City of Cape Town to 'Save like a Local'.

Facilities possibly impacted:

- Swimming pools may be closed
- Steam rooms and saunas may be closed
- Bath plugs may be removed
- Gardens and lawns may not be watered

Please help us save water:

- Limit your shower to under two minutes
- Close the tap when brushing teeth
- Reuse towels instead of asking for a new one every day
- Report leaks or dripping taps

Star Beds, Sleep-Outs & Hides – Defining the Experience

To help distinguish the differences in offering to ensure expectations are met, the following terminology will be used in much of our collateral and systems:

- **A Hide:** literally used for game viewing (hiding amongst logs, in a bunker, often at a waterhole, etc.). Described as "sunken" or "raised" where relevant – Little Makalolo, Savuti, Linyanti Tented, Kings Pool, etc.
- **A Viewing Platform:** may be high up or on ground/water level but is not a hide in the traditional sense, such as the platforms at Savuti, the new expanded deck at Busanga Bush Camp, the floating platform at the end of DumaTau or the platform on the roof above the main area at Davison's. May also be used for sundowners, bush brunches, etc.
- **A Sleep-out Deck** – this is on either the roof or the patio of a room...such as Little Kulala, Kulala Desert Lodge, Doro Nawas and Kalahari Plains. A Sleep-out Deck is not booked in advance as it is part of the accommodation unit.
- **A Star Bed** – this is an overnight facility away from the standard room, either in camp or further away and accessed by vehicle only, with some form of ablutions available. They may be directly under the stars or with some sort of covering, in the canopy of a tree or an exposed platform, etc. Examples are the DumaTau and Abu Star Beds, Madison Pan ex Little Makalolo, Scott's Pan ex Linkwasha, Parachute Pan ex Ruckomechi and the Bird's Nest ex Segera Retreat.

In addition, during the drier months i.e. 1 April to 30 November, it is now possible to pre-book the DumaTau and Abu Star Beds in inventory, providing you with the opportunity to add value to an itinerary in advance:

- There is no additional cost attached to the offering. Even if pre-booked, be aware that the experience may still be cancelled due to inclement weather
- DumaTau requires a minimum 3-night stay to pre-book, while Abu has no restrictions.
- Minimum age is 13 years sharing with an adult. Adults are considered 17 years and older.
- Both Star Beds are still available between 1 December and 31 March but at camp discretion/subject to weather – so not in inventory over this time but we will add a note to the booking if requested.

REMINDERS

Festive Season Hours for Travel Shops

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

South Africa

Friday 22 December – Closed from 13:00 for Christmas weekend

Monday 25 December – Closed for Christmas

Tuesday 26 December – Closed for the Day of Goodwill (Boxing Day)

Friday 29 December – Closed from 13:00 for New Year's weekend

Monday 1 January 2018 – Closed for New Year's Day

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.

Botswana – Maun & Gaborone

Friday 1 December – Gaborone offices closed from 14:30 for end of year function
Friday 22 December – Closed from 13:00 for Christmas weekend
Monday 25 December – Closed for Christmas
Tuesday 26 December – Closed for day of Goodwill
Friday 29 December – Closed from 13:00 for New Year's weekend
Monday 1 January 2018 – Closed for New Year's Day

Namibia

Monday 11 December – Closed for a public holiday
Friday 22 December – Closed from 13:00 for Christmas weekend
Monday 25 December – Closed for Christmas
Tuesday 26 December – Closed for the Day of Goodwill (Family or Boxing Day)
Friday 29 December – Closed from 13:00 for New Year's weekend
Monday 1 January 2018 – Closed for New Year's Day

Rwanda

Friday 22 December – Closed from 13:00 for Christmas weekend
Monday 25 December – Closed for Christmas
Tuesday 26 December – Closed for Boxing Day
Friday 29 December – Closed from 13:00 for New Year's weekend
Monday 1 January 2018 – Closed for New Year's Day
Tuesday 2 January 2018 – Also a public holiday (day after New Year's Day)

Zambezi

Friday 1 December – Closed from 15:30 for end of year function
Friday 22 December – Closed for Unity Day
Monday 25 December – Closed for Christmas
Tuesday 26 December – Closed for the Day of Goodwill (Boxing Day)
Friday 29 December – Closed from 13:00 for New Year's weekend
Monday 1 January 2018 – Closed for New Year's Day

WILDERNESS SAFARIS PRIVATE JOURNEYS – CAPE

Table Mountain National Park Introduces New Differential Conservation Fees in 2018

South African National Parks will introduce differential conservation fees for Table Mountain National Parks, from 1 November 2018. The fees, which apply to Cape Point and Boulders, are as follows:

- Cape Point: Standard (Foreigners): R300 (€18); Southern African Development Community (SADC) Nationals: R150 (€9); and SA residents: R75 (€4).
- Boulders: Standard: R150 (€9); SADC Nationals: R75 (€4); and SA residents: R38 (€2).

WILDERNESS AIR

NB | Wilderness Air Botswana Flying Reminder

- It is a simplified circuit, flying to areas to match the rates - not specific airstrips.
- There are no set times except for departures ex Maun or Kasane and for the Zambezi Triangle (LVI/BBK/VFA). Please do not include times per the previous schedule on any documentation provided to guests travelling on Wilderness Air in Botswana, as these no longer apply.
- The flying window is between 10:30 and 16:00, and guests are given flight times the night prior in camp.
- We fly to Wilderness and selected Third Party camps – 12 thus far.
- You do not have to have a Wilderness Safaris camp in the itinerary to make use of our flying circuit (although it is preferable that there is at least one Wilderness camp).
- Names – please be aware that if there are no passenger names as per passport 2 weeks prior to travel, bookings on seat rates will be released, and sole use charters need to be booked and paid for instead.
- The 20kgs baggage allowance stipulated in our terms & conditions for Wilderness Air INCLUDES carry-on luggage – back-packs, camera equipment, sleep apnoea machines, etc.

WILDERNESS TOURING & TRANSFERS – ZAMBEZI

Zambezi Helicopter Company (ZHC) Guarantees Window Seats

With immediate effect, ZHC will guarantee a window seat to all passengers. They will only book the middle seat if specifically requested to do so. The helicopters also have "Panoramic-Viewing Windows" – huge bubble windows allowing for amazing photographic opportunities and extra cabin space.

BOTSWANA

No Change - Proposed Botswana Tourism Development Levy

Still pending and may be implemented at any time.

Latest on Low Water Levels/Activities

- Xigera: no boating with immediate effect. Mokoro excursions are still possible, from a station about 40 minutes' drive from camp.
- Seba: no boating and offering only a short mokoro activity.
- Abu: no water activities at all.
- Jao: full mokoro activity about 35 minutes' drive from camp. Boating activities are limited.
- Kwetsani: mokoro activities are from the same area as Jao, about 45 minutes' drive from camp. Boating activities are limited. Transfer between camp and airstrip is by road – 40-minute game drive one way.
- Pelo: the camp closes for the season on 30 November, but they are still doing boating and mokoro activities.
- Jacana: currently normal boating and mokoro activities although boating may be limited in a couple of weeks. Transfer between camp and airstrip is by road – 30-minute drive one way.
- Tubu Tree & Little Tubu: no boating or mokoro activities
- Jao concession: they have opened the road between the Jao and Hunda sides of the concession, so Kwetsani and Jao now drive to Hunda, which is about an hour's drive.

NAMIBIA

E-powered Fat Bikes at Kulala Desert Lodge – 2017 & 2018 Costs

The cost is NAD/ZAR 300 per person in 2017 and NAD/ZAR 351 per person in 2018. Excursions may only be booked and paid for directly in camp.

RWANDA

Check-in & Check-out Times at Bisate Lodge

Guests may check-in after 14:00, and must check-out before 10:30, unless they are gorilla trekking on the day of departure, in which case check-out is 06:00. If arriving early or departing late, every effort will be made to have a villa available for their use. However, this is not guaranteed so to guarantee a late check-out or early check-in, you will need to book and charge for a room for the extra night.

Arrivals:

- Should guests arrive early in the morning, Thousand Hills Africa will take them a city tour of Kigali, which includes a key and insightful visit to the Genocide Memorial. Enjoy a cup of delicious Rwandan coffee or a light lunch at a local restaurant before departing for Bisate on the guided road transfer – approximately 3 hours' drive. An alternative to spending time in Kigali is a stop en-route in Musanze for lunch and an introduction to Dian Fossey and her legacy, the Karisoke exhibit to learn about gorilla conservation or a visit to the Twin Lakes, formed by volcanic activity.

Departures:

- If guests are not doing a gorilla trek on the day of departure, enjoy breakfast with views of Bisoke before departing the lodge at 10:30 on the road transfer back to Kigali or other onward arrangements. Should guests have time on their hands in Kigali before the flight, our suggestion is to book a day room at one of the hotels.
- If guests are doing a gorilla trek on their day of departure, they will need to be packed and ready to vacate their room by 06:00. After the gorilla trekking, it is possible to return to Bisate where they may have a shower and freshen up in the cloakroom before proceeding with their onward arrangements. They will however, not have access to a guest room. Should guests return to Kigali directly after the gorilla trekking, and time allows, our suggestion is to book a day room at one of the hotels to freshen up before their onward arrangements.

SEYCHELLES

New Zil Air Rates Still Not Available

Until the new rates are available, bookings made and confirmed (with full names and international flight details), will be honoured at the current rates.

SOUTH AFRICA

Increase in Park Fees for Rocktail Camp

Payable direct in camp, the Isimangaliso Wetland Park fees have increased and our Pre-tour information, Wilderness Window and the notes on the published rates sheets for 2017, 2018 & 2019 (only RACK rate sheet for 2019) have all been updated accordingly:

- Adults ZAR 27.00
- Children ZAR 16.00
- Vehicles ZAR 27.00
- Conservation Levy ZAR 5.00 per person

AIRLINES & AIRPORTS

Airlink Adds Second Flight to CPT-KMIA route

Airlink has added a second direct flight to its Cape Town – Nelspruit KMIA routing. The additional flights operate every day of the week except Saturday.

British Airways (BA) Increasing Capacity to Africa

- BA have added 680 seats a week between London and Johannesburg by increasing its current 10-times-a-week A380 service to double daily, replacing the four weekly B747 flights.
- The daily London-Cape Town Boeing 747 service will increase to double daily for the South African summer season and the airline will start operating three additional Boeing 777 services from Gatwick.
- It will provide a number of extra services from Heathrow to meet demand over the New Year peak, Indaba, UK half term in February, and Easter.
- The airline is also growing its presence in the Indian Ocean islands, starting services to the Seychelles and, from the end of October, expanding the current Boeing 777 services from Gatwick to Mauritius, from three to five a week.

RwandAir Optimises Kigali-Brussels Route

Previously the route ran Kigali-London-Brussels-London-Kigali, and it will now operate Kigali-Brussels-London-Brussels-Kigali. This now eliminates the requirement for non-Schengen citizens to hold a UK transit visa and to disembark for re-screening at Gatwick Airport in London.

Federal Airlines Renovates Passenger Lounge at KMIA

Federal Airlines recently renovated its private passenger lounge at Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport. Until now the lounge has been exclusive to Federal Airlines guests, however, from 1 December 2017, the airline will also offer access to other passengers, as well as a meet and greet service, for a fee. These services are however included in the ticket price for all Federal Airlines guests.

New Runway for Nairobi Airport in 2018

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) in Nairobi, Kenya, is set to undergo a major expansion with the construction of a new runway, which will have the capacity to handle larger aircraft. Construction is scheduled to commence in June 2018 once the African Development Bank approves the necessary loan.

Air France Increases Frequency to Cape Town

Air France will increase the number of frequencies to Cape Town from three to five weekly flights.

Alitalia to Return to SA Skies Next Year

Alitalia will return to South African skies next year, after a 16-year absence. From April 2018, the Italian carrier will launch a four-times-a-week service between Rome and Johannesburg.

Cheers

Tina

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