



30 October 2017

NEW

Easy to Book, Highly Recommended Zambezi Itinerary

One click is all it takes – just about! In anticipation of the 2018 season, we will be adding the programme below to the Wilderness Window as a pre-loaded itinerary, making it easy to book and quote. Others will follow in due course so watch this space! From personal experience, this is an amazing journey so I have included some highlights and a few of my images from a recent trip...

- Arrive Victoria Falls or Livingstone and spend 2 nights at Toka Leya for an introduction to the Zambezi River, the Victoria Falls, cruises, adrenalin activities, spa treatments and the only rhino in Zambia.
- A flight of just under two hours from Livingstone to Kafue National Park takes you into truly remote and wild wilderness! Spend 3 nights at Shumba or Busanga Bush Camp, and enjoy vast plains dotted with tree islands, huge herds of lechwe and puku, wildebeest, hippos, cheetah, lions, wonderful birding plus less common antelope like roan, sable and oribi. Ballooning later in the season showcases the beauty of the area while a visit in June and July provides a completely different experience when exploring by boat and mokoro.
- Fly from the Busanga Plains to Lusaka, for a two to three hour road transfer to Chirundu via the Zambian escarpment (a great way to see more of Zambia), before hopping onto a boat for an adrenalin filled trip down the Zambezi River to Ruckomechi or Little Ruckomechi for 3 nights. Mana Pools' diverse habitat plays host to an elephant "extravaganza" (especially in the drier months), leopards, lions, wild dogs, buffalo, hippos, impala (not seen as much on the Plains) and great birds.
- Transfer by air from Mana Pools to Harare (shorter than the Victoria Falls leg) for your onward arrangements.





NEWSFLASH

Temporary Closure of Doro Nawas Airstrip

Emergency and unavoidable repair work has become necessary on the Doro Nawas airstrip and we will be closing the strip for 4 - 5 weeks from Monday 30 October to Monday 4 December 2017, with the intention of re-opening on 5 December (should this change, we will advise). We will be moving our flying hub and refueling facilities across to Twyfelfontein airstrip over this period. Approximately 14 kms away from Doro Nawas by air, guests on flights in and out of Twyfelfontein en-route to Hoanib Skeleton Coast/Serra Cafema/Damaraland Camp/Desert Rhino Camp, will only be affected by a slightly longer or shorter flying time depending on route. Those staying at Doro Nawas will now have a road transfer of around 40 minutes (37 kms) between the lodge and Twyfelfontein airstrip.

Cape Town Water Rationing

The Western Cape is experiencing a severe drought, particularly in and around Cape Town. Due to the critical nature of available water supply, all users across Cape Town must expect water rationing, and possible disruptions during peak water usage times (between 05:00 and 09:00 in the morning and 17:00 and 21:00 in the evening). When visiting, please be aware and conserve water where possible.

IMPORTANT

NB | Flying Times No Longer Exist with Wilderness Air Botswana

Except for the Zambezi Triangle between Kasane, Livingstone and Victoria Falls, we no longer have set flight times in Botswana. 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.

Use of Drones & UAVs on Wilderness Concessions

The use of drones is illegal in most of the countries in which we operate, in addition to the various other ethical and safety issues at stake. There are serious consequences if caught flying or travelling with a drone in most African countries; i.e., possible confiscation of and even prosecution for flying drones without clearance/licensing. Wilderness Safaris has therefore issued a **No Drone Flying Policy** in all of its concessions in Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This policy extends to terrestrial UAVs, as well as to aerial UAVs, or drones. We include mention in the General Information Manual and the statement is on the Info Centre under FAQs.

UPDATE | Delays at Windhoek Airport

Ongoing delays are being experienced as a result of a number of factors: the introduction of biometric data capture and the arrival of 5 to 6 flights at the same time, resulting in long queues at immigration. On departure, we recommend that guests proceed to security and immigration as soon as they have checked in.

Self-drives in South Africa – Fines & Toll Fees

It is advisable to share the following with those guests hiring cars and driving themselves around South Africa:

*It is strictly illegal to pay cash to a traffic officer or to any other official on the roadside. Legitimate fines should only be paid at the police station or magistrate's court, where a receipt must be issued. Toll fees are **ONLY** payable at toll gates. Under no circumstances may a tourist be coerced into paying toll fees at an ATM. Should you have any problems or doubts please call the following number immediately: **SA Police – 10111***

REMINDER

DON'T FORGET | Toka Leya Camp & the Tour of the Falls Special until the end of 2017

Between now and 31 December 2017, when water levels are low, guests staying at Toka Leya have the option of participating in EITHER a Zambian or Zimbabwean Tour of the Falls. Aside from visa fees (for the guests' own account), there is no additional cost involved if guests wish to visit the Zimbabwean side of the falls INSTEAD of the Zambian side. This does not have to be pre-booked although it will assist the camp if we advise them in advance whether your guest has a preference.

REMEMBER | Seasonal Full Board Rate at Toka Leya & Davison's Camp

Valid from 1 November 2017 to 31 March 2018, we have a Full Board (FB) rate at Toka Leya and Davison's. Excluding activities, this rate suits those guests looking for more flexibility - booked for only one night or preferring to stay in camp. Note that self-drive guests at Davison's still do activities with Wilderness Safaris as we are in a private concession. All activities are booked and paid for directly in camp. This FB rate still includes accommodation, all meals, park fees, laundry and all local drinks but excludes all activities, premium imported brands and champagne.

RATES

Shoulder Season Rate Change – Botswana 2018 & 2019

The rates for Vumbura Plains North & South, Kings Pool and Jao camps have increased slightly for the period 01 November to 19 December 2018 & 01 November to 19 December 2019. Applicable to all new bookings, we will honour the previous rates for all existing bookings as at 24 October 2017. Updated Rates Sheets are available in the Window.

WILDERNESS SAFARIS PRIVATE JOURNEYS – CAPE

New Queuing System & Rate Increase for Table Mountain

As of 1 November 2017, a new queuing system ensures online ticket holders are given preference when accessing the cable cars. If requested and booked through Wilderness Safaris Private Journeys, Table Mountain tickets are always booked online, in advance. Note that the annual rate increase came into effect on 1 October 2017.

Robben Island Bookings

In order to make a booking, Robben Island now require the following information – all passenger names, passports/ID numbers, contact numbers and next-of-kin. Please provide this information when requesting this service from your Journey Consultant.

WILDERNESS TOURING & TRANSFERS – ZAMBEZI

Cross Border Transfer Reminder

- Between Livingstone and Kasane – road & ferry.
- Between Livingstone and Victoria Falls or Victoria Falls and Kasane – road only.
- Guests may change vehicles at the borders and must have at least six blank pages in their passports.
- The Zambia/Zimbabwe border is very busy, which may cause delays. If guests arrive Livingstone on Airlink from Nelspruit, there is not enough time for afternoon activities (except for a Tour of the Falls) on the day of arrival.
- We are still waiting for Immigration to update us on Kaza visa stickers.

Transfers Elsewhere & Excursions

- Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe have partners in both Harare and Bulawayo to assist with transfers.
- Ra-Ikane have 1 x 12 seater and 2 x 16 seaters for cruises, and offer these on both a private and scheduled basis.
- Helicopters – the norm is minimum two, however, if you have a single traveller, ask your Journey Specialist to check whether the helicopter operators have existing bookings with space to accommodate one pax.

Elephant Excursions – Take Note

Having discontinued this activity at Abu, we will no longer book elephant back riding in Livingstone and Victoria Falls from 1 January 2018. Should you wish to book an elephant back ride, you must do so directly with the relevant supplier. As an alternative, we will book the Elephant Interaction – engaging with elephants in the morning (breakfast) or afternoon (tea & snacks) – or Painting/Art sessions where experienced artists guide guests in how to paint the elephants.

River Safari & Water Taxi Bookings - Livingstone

Due to the low water level of the Zambezi river, it is unsafe to use the standard route to the Royal Livingstone hotel deck. The following will apply from 20 October 2017 until further notice (including confirmed bookings):

- All River Safari cruises will start and end at the Royal Landing.
- The Ultimate cruise will depart from the Royal Landing.
- No water taxis will operate during this time.

BOTSWANA

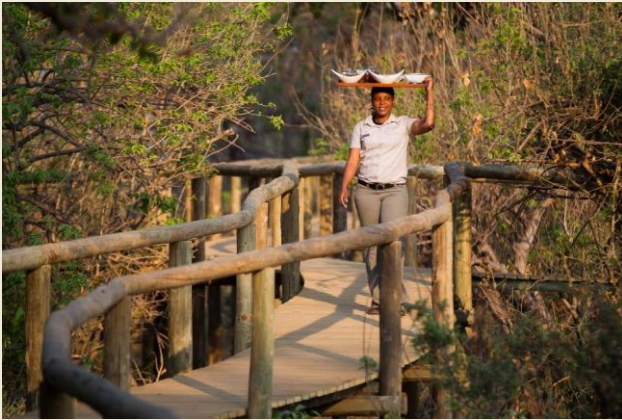
CORRECTION | New Vehicles at Vumbura Plains

The new vehicles at Vumbura Plains currently do NOT have fridges in place of the front seat like the Mombo vehicles. They do have centre consoles, lighting above the seats and USB charge points. The side of the vehicle opens into the front row, with a little step to make it easier to get in and out.

Water Activity Update

- Kings Pool – still offering the Queen Sylvia barge, however, water levels continue to drop and they will most likely stop doing this activity by mid-November.
- Savuti – currently still able to offer a boating excursion.
- The Vumbura camps - offer boating and mokoro activities year round as they have permanent channels that always have water.
- Abu – has stopped both boating and the mokoro excursion with elephants. Standard mekoro and fishing in the lagoon in front of camp are still possible.
- Seba – water levels are low...only mekoro and no boating or fishing.
- Xigera – boating is now about 40 minutes' drive from camp. Mekoro remain on offer, about 15 minutes' drive from camp.
- Jao Camp - still offering boating (from the boat station at the back of the island) and mokoro activities about a 25 minute drive from camp. Trips to Hunda Island involve a drive of 35 minutes and a 20-minute boat shuttle (maximum of 4 people at a time).
- Kwetsani Camp – still offering limited boating (about 40 minutes from camp) and mokoro activities (45 minutes' drive). Trips to Hunda Island involve a drive of 5 minutes and a 20-minute boat shuttle (maximum of 4 people at a time).
- Tubu Tree & Little Tubu – boating is now closed. Normal mokoro activities continue for now but will probably cease in a few more weeks. The mokoro station is about 35 minutes from camp.
- Jacana Camp – still offering full boating and mokoro activities from camp.
- Pelo Camp – offering slightly limited boating. Mud Buddy engines on the boats allow them to operate in shallow water. Mokoro activities are from camp. Transfers to and from the airstrip involve a 5 minute boat ride and 40 minute drive.

Seba Boardwalks Complete & Mosquito Nets Installed



NAMIBIA

No More Summer vs Winter Times in Namibia

Namibia will no longer put their clocks back between April and September, and will be on the same time zone as the rest of southern Africa year round.

Very Important | Information Re: Pick Up & Drop Off for Self-Drives in Namibia

Please ensure guests are aware of the requirements listed below when travelling on a self-drive basis to our camps, particularly when transfers are necessary. To avoid inconvenience for both the guest and the camp, please discuss arrangements and timings with your Journey Specialist prior to travel.

- **Damaraland Camp:** For those travelling in a 2x4 vehicle, the times for the transfer into camp from Fonteine Pos is 10:00, 14:00 or 17:00. Should guests miss these collection times, the community will radio the camp for assistance. It will take approximately 45 minutes for the driver to arrive at Fonteine Pos from the camp, if not longer, so we highly recommend getting to Fonteine Pos for one of the scheduled transfer times. Guests park 2x4 vehicles at their own risk at Fonteine Pos, while guests travelling in a 4x4 vehicle may drive directly to the camp.
- **Desert Rhino Camp:** Not directly accessible on a self-drive basis. All self-drive itineraries travelling to Desert Rhino Camp need to park their vehicles (2x4 and 4x4), at Twee Palms (signposted as "Desert Rhino Camp Pick-Up Point"). The Desert Rhino Camp transfer vehicle will meet guests at Twee Palms at 14:30 in winter (1 April to 31 August) and 15:30 in summer (1 September to 31 March). Important - guests must arrive at Twee Palms no later than 14:00 in winter and 15:00 in summer to be on time for the onward road transfer to camp, as it is an approximate 2.5 hour nature drive through the Palmwag Concession to Desert Rhino Camp. Vehicles are parked at own risk at Twee Palms.
- **Self-Drives between Swakopmund & Desert Rhino Camp:** It is a minimum 7 hour drive from Swakopmund, and poor road conditions plus possible fog, can increase that to 8 hours. After arriving at the times specified above, it is still a 2.5 hour drive into camp from Twee Palms – so guests will have been on the road for nearly 11 hours. The same applies when driving from Windhoek to Desert Rhino – virtually impossible if only flying in that same day. To ensure your guests have the best possible experience, plan an itinerary that allows for a comfortable drive over two days with a night's rest in-between.

SEYCHELLES

Zil Air – Passport Names Required Plus Identification

In accordance with Seychelles Civil Aviation regulations, Zil Air require full names as per passport for all passengers i.e. John Smith / Janet Smith. 'Smith X2' and/or 'Mr & Mrs Smith' is not acceptable. All guests travelling with Zil Air are required to produce positive identification at check-in - either a passport or an ID Document.

SOUTH AFRICA

Turtle Season Begins at Rocktail

The first turtles of the season arrived on 22 October 2017! A Leatherback was spotted laying eggs while a Loggerhead was seen heading back into the sea! Turtle drives may be booked between 15 October until 15 March (the official season per the parks board), although sightings of laying turtles or hatchlings are not guaranteed. The norm is that for the first part of the season, you may see turtles coming ashore to lay eggs and for the second part, witness turtles hatching and making their way down to the sea.

Permanent Closure of One Family Room at Rocktail Camp

We have reduced inventory at Rocktail by closing one family room. Going forward, total inventory will be 16 rooms, including 6 family rooms. No existing bookings are affected.

ZIMBABWE

Opening Dates for Ruckomechi in 2018

Ruckomechi opens for the season 1 April 2018, while Little Ruckomechi opens on 1 May 2018.

Road Transfers between Victoria Falls and Hwange – Not Recommended

Immigration formalities at Victoria Falls Airport may take up to 2 hours, before guests depart on a 2.5 hour drive to Hwange Main Camp. It is a further 3 to 4 hour game drive to our camps (if the Parks Board allow you to continue and do not insist you overnight at Hwange Main Camp because you may not drive through the park at night). Guests are often unhappy if they only arrive in camp nearly 8 hours after landing at Victoria Falls. For about US\$ 70.00 pp more, an hour's flight from Victoria Falls to our camps in Hwange is definitely the faster and more convenient access option.

Solar Pumps in Hwange

A number of the pumps we are responsible for in Hwange are now solar, with small silent pack generators as back up in the very dry months when needed.

Cooling Units at Linkwasha

The "air-cons" in the Linkwasha rooms are more for climate control – cooling and warming the room. They are not true air conditioners in the sense that you will not get 16 degrees inside if it is 40 degrees outside.

AIRLINES & AIRPORTS

Additional Air Access for Cape Town

Air Botswana (Gaborone), Austrian Airlines (Vienna), Lufthansa (Frankfurt), Edelweiss (Zurich) and Eurowings (Cologne) will be adding flights or increasing frequency to Cape Town in the coming months.

Cheers

Tina

Wilderness Product Manager



www.wilderness-safaris.com

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