

25 September 2015

## NEWSFLASH

### Mombo Rebuild Postponement

We have unfortunately experienced an unavoidable delay in beginning the rebuild of Mombo and Little Mombo camps. In essence we are now going to experience a 10 week delay up front and have as a result, changed the schedule at the end of the development period too. There are sound, sensible reasons for this over which we had no control, however, it does mean that over certain periods we have to move bookings around. The revised situation is as follows:

#### Mombo Main

- 9 rooms + 1 guide room until 31 October 2015.
- Reduces to 7 rooms + 1 guide room on 1 November 2015.
- Closes on 8 January 2016 until 31 July 2016.
- The "new" camp opens on 1 August 2016 with 8 rooms + 1 guide room.
- The last room opens on 2 April 2017 – back to a total of 9 rooms + 1 guide room.

#### Little Mombo

- 3 rooms until 31 October 2015.
- Increases to 5 rooms on 1 November 2015 until 31 July 2016.
- No guide room until 14 January 2016, however, from 15 January until 31 July 2016 there will be a guide room.
- Closes on 1 August 2016 until 1 April 2017.
- The "new" camp opens on 2 April 2017 with 3 rooms.

#### Mombo Trails

- Opens on 15 January 2016 with 7 rooms + 1 guide room.
- Reduces to 4 rooms + 1 guide room on 1 August 2016.
- Closes completely on 2 April 2017.

Note that your Reservations/Sales Manager or Journey Specialist will get in touch directly regarding affected bookings.

All NEW bookings placed at Little Mombo and Mombo Main between 1 November 2015 and 14 January 2016 will be at standard rates, with the discount only coming into effect once the rebuild commences.

The Botswana Rates Sheets plus other collateral will be updated shortly to reflect these changes.

We would like to apologise for the inconvenience and thank you for your understanding during this process. Rest assured that the team on the ground will ensure your guests still have a fantastic experience during their stay on the Mombo concession.

### Hoanib Rate Increase

The first 12 months of operation in such a remote and remarkably beautiful region has been a whirlwind, one that has generated occupancies exceeding 80%. The fantastic reception we have received for Hoanib from guests, partners and the press has been astounding, and we are extremely proud of the numerous awards we have won to prove that a small safari camp run on 100% solar power can still stand out amongst the world's best. We sincerely thank all of our trade partners for helping to make this happen.

MD of Namibia, Mike Wassung, recalls, "We have used this first year to get settled in and to assess the challenges that we encountered operating in such a remote region, facing what can only be described as 'beautifully extreme' conditions."

The main challenge we have faced is in operating the scenic flights to and from the Skeleton Coast, which we have been offering included in the rate for every three-night stay or more. Although the coastal fog impacted the early morning flights, with access to the coast now enabled by a fascinating game drive through the floodplain and dune fields, our biggest trial is the winds that buffet our airstrip at camp. Due to this environmental factor, we no longer operate the lighter C210 or C206 aircrafts at Hoanib, but use the Cessna Caravan instead – a far heavier plane that is less affected by the wind. This has resulted in a dramatically increased cost of operation that is unfortunately no longer sustainable, which is why we need to increase the rate per person per night by ZAR/N\$ 1 800.00.

We recognise how popular the coastal excursion is and how central it is to the Hoanib experience. The only way to continue offering it on an inclusive basis to guests staying three nights or longer is therefore to increase the nightly rate.

As the opening special has now come to an end, please be advised that this increase will come into effect from 1 October 2015, applicable to all NEW bookings and the Spirit of Namibia programme. All existing bookings at Hoanib Skeleton Coast will be honoured at the previous rate.

If you have any further queries, please contact your Reservations/Sales Manager or Journey Specialist.

#### Re-classification of Little Kulala and Serra Cafema Camps

With effect from 1 October 2015, Little Kulala and Serra Cafema will both be re-classified as Classic Camps (no longer Premier). Although Little Kulala's rate has been reduced for the forthcoming rate season, Serra Cafema will not undergo a rate reduction due to the remote and challenging location of the camp.

#### Feedback on Toka Leya, Linkwasha and Ruckomechi

I travelled to Livingstone and Zimbabwe recently and wanted to take this opportunity to share my impressions and a few pictures that featured in blogs on our website. I had a truly wonderful time with amazing experiences...I hope you manage to find a gap to have a look at the below and be inspired!

[http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/blog/safari-albums#gallery-1614\\_Toka+Leya+is+Simply+Terrific](http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/blog/safari-albums#gallery-1614_Toka+Leya+is+Simply+Terrific)

[http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/blog/safari-albums#gallery-1615\\_Hwange+Wonderland](http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/blog/safari-albums#gallery-1615_Hwange+Wonderland)

[http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/blog/safari-albums#gallery-1616\\_Awe-inspiring+Ruckomechi](http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/blog/safari-albums#gallery-1616_Awe-inspiring+Ruckomechi)

#### UPDATE | Six Countries Summer Special

As of the 15 September 2015, Little Mombo, Chitabe and Chitabe Lediba were added to our Six Countries Summer Special Deal, valid 10 November 2015 to 20 March 2016 (excluding festive season).

Further to the adjustments noted above, there is no change to the Six Countries rates already in the marketplace for Hoanib, Little Kulala and Serra Cafema.

#### UPDATE | Water Levels in the Delta

- **Abu** – water levels have dropped resulting in less boating and mokoro excursions, however, the receding waters equate to more land available for game drives.
- **Seba** - water levels have dropped to the point that we can no longer offer boat excursions, however, we are still offering mekoro and fishing trips.
- **Jao Concession** – the water levels are dropping fast and some channels have been closed. Transfers or trips to Hunda Island from Jao, Kwetsani, Jacana and Pelo will involve a drive to the jetty at Kwetsani and then taking a transfer on a "mud buddy" boat across the channel. Tubu's water activities are currently very limited and will soon come to an end.
- **Xigera** – the water is dropping fast. Currently we are still able to boat from camp and to the hippo pools, although 2 boats have been moved to the boat station approximately 40 minutes' drive from camp. Come October there will probably be no boating from camp, only from the other boat station in the main channels and the lagoon. Mokoro excursions are still fine.
- **Vumbura Plains** – although the general water levels have dropped, the boat and mokoro excursions operate in areas where water levels are still fine.
- **Kings Pool** – will probably have to stop boating at the end of this month.
- **DumaTau** – water levels are dropping and we may have to extend the jetty and steps to the barge. For now, barge cruises and brunches on Osprey Lagoon are fine, as is the use of the smaller boat for fishing and smaller cruises, etc.

#### Quad Bikes at Rocktail Out of Action

The quad bike excursion is currently not on offer as the bikes are out of operation. Rocktail is in the process of sourcing a supplier who can service and repair the bikes – as soon as they are operational, we will advise.

#### IMPORTANT

##### Camp Closures for Maintenance in Early 2016

- **Abu Camp** is closed for maintenance from 24 January to 29 February 2016, inclusive, re-opening on 1 March 2016. This period was chosen as there were minimal bookings in the system and quite substantial work needs to be done including:
  - Sanding and treating the interior floors/decks of all rooms.
  - Installation of sliding doors and clear view mesh in all rooms.
  - Sanding and treating the interior floors/decks of the main area.
  - Working on all balustrades of the main area and rooms.
- **Jacana Camp** is closed from 4 January to 6 March 2016, inclusive, so that they can redo the main area, reopening on 7 March 2016.

## INFO CENTRE

### Where Do I Find It?

- ❖ **The new Toka Leya Activity Brochure:** detailing both standard included and optional extra activities available to guests – found under FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), Activities & Wildlife.
- ❖ **Camp Information Sheets:** for the most current information on the specifics of our camps - found under Camp Facts, Country, Category, Information Sheets.
- ❖ **Packing Suggestions:** found under FAQs, Helpful Hints & Travel Requirements.
- ❖ **Romance in the Wilderness:** promoting Wilderness as a romantic destination - found under Product Categories & Selling Tools, How to Sell Wilderness.
- ❖ **Recommended Restaurants in the Cape Winelands** – found under Wilderness Touring, Cape Town, General.

## WILDERNESS AIR

### Complimentary Meet & Assist in Zambia

We are pleased to advise that with immediate effect, we are offering a complimentary meet & assist service at both Livingstone and Lusaka Airports. Staravia, the operators of the Wilderness Air flying circuit in Zambia, will provide these services on the ground. They will meet all guests arriving off a scheduled commercial flight and departing on the circuit or arriving off our circuit and connecting to a scheduled commercial flight. This service will not be offered if there is no Wilderness Air flight involved e.g. ex SAA for Proflight. Do note that there is nowhere to store luggage in either Lusaka or Livingstone.

### REMINDER | Namibia Operating a Circuit Business Only in 2016

As of 1 March 2016, Wilderness Air Namibia will utilise their aircraft for our circuit business only. All quotes or bookings for private charters will be placed with our preferred third party suppliers.

### Number of Passengers/Weight Limitations on Wilderness Air Aircraft

Note that the Aircraft Specification documents in the Agent Manual state the maximum numbers that could be flown on the aircraft that Wilderness Air operate. However, this information is from the manufacturer and is to advise the size, design and capabilities of the aircraft – it is NOT a guarantee of how many people may be flown on the relevant aircraft on every possible leg. The number of passengers carried on each leg of our circuit flights is dependent on aircraft used, time of year, passenger and luggage weights, routing, fuel required, etc.

### C-PAP/Sleep Apnoea Machines

Note that the size of the machine does not matter, however, it is the weight that must be taken into account as part of the overall 20 kg per person regulation. Remember that the 20 kg luggage restriction includes both check-in (soft bag) and carry-on (handbag, backpack, camera equipment, sleep apnoea machine, etc.).

### Connections between Livingstone & Kasane

It is not possible to connect from a scheduled commercial flight in Livingstone, arriving 13:20/13:30, with the Botswana circuit departure from Kasane at 14:20. A minimum of two hours is needed for guests to clear Livingstone immigration/collect bags, board/take off and fly approximately 25 minutes LVI/BBK, disembark/collect bags/clear Botswana immigration and then board the circuit. The only options are either an overnight in Livingstone on arrival, or a sole use charter from Livingstone via Kasane to the camps.

### Early Departures from Maun

Sole use charters need to be booked, if departure from Maun is between 09:30 and 10:00, and the pilot will need to overnight in camp the night before.

### IMPORTANT | Luggage Reminder

Note that the Wilderness Air weight allowance must please be strictly adhered to – the weight, type of bag and dimensions, especially the height and width. The relevant details appear in the General Information Manual, published Rates Sheets, Wilderness Agent Manual, stand-alone documents on the Info Centre, our quotes, our pre-tour documents and our vouchers.

## WILDERNESS TOURING

### CAPE FEATURED EXCURSION | Full Day Robben Island & New Hope Township Tour

We recommend opting for a private guide and vehicle (at a surcharge) for a visit to the historic prison of Robben Island, which for some 450 years incarcerated convicts, slaves, exiled Eastern princes, lepers, the insane and political prisoners including Nelson Mandela. Accessed by boat, the excursion is weather dependent. View the historical impact of racial segregation during the Apartheid era in District Six and on the Cape Flats, and explore the rich history and culture of the local townships including Khayelitsha. Visit community programs, such as the Iliso Care Society, dedicated to uplifting the lives of the local people.

### ZAMBEZI FEATURED EXCURSION | Zambezi Reflections Lunch Cruise

Zambezi Reflections is a floating restaurant serving meals on the mighty Zambezi River above the Victoria Falls. The beauty of this activity is that there are few or no other boats on the river at that time and one can sit back, relax and enjoy Zambezi style gourmet cuisine, excellent service and the spectacular scenery. This lunch cruise is perfect for either group bookings or individual travellers. The boat has one covered deck and can carry a maximum of 34 passengers on the lunch cruise – a duration of 2 hours, starting from 12:00.

### Wilderness Safaris Touring offers new Zambezi Cruise

Note that the touring division of Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe does not own or operate any boats, however, they book the various suppliers on our behalf. Operated by Dingani Tours, this two-hour sunset cruise on the Zambezi River is on board the newly-refurbished Wanuka Queen boats, which are fully carpeted and have rest rooms, a bistro and bar-type furnishings. Departing from Victoria Falls, guests have the opportunity to see a variety of game, including hippo, crocodile and elephant while enjoying finger snacks, beer, wine, local spirits and soft drinks.

### Devil's Pool now Open

Swimming in Devil's Pool on Livingstone Island opened earlier this month. Please advise all guests that might be interested in swimming in the Devil's Pool to carry their swimming attire when visiting Livingstone Island.

### Reduction in Cost for Private Road Transfer – Livingstone Airport to Royal Livingstone

Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe have reduced the private vehicle rate for the Livingstone Airport – Royal Livingstone Hotel transfer with immediate effect. The minimum number of passengers is now 5 and no longer 6, and this is applicable to all new bookings. For your information, the vehicles we use are mostly 13-seaters, and we replace these every 5 years.

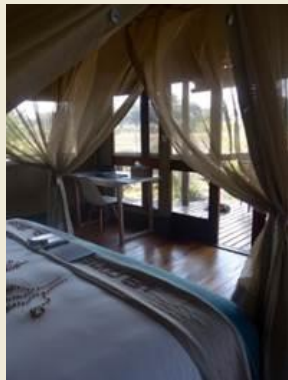
## BOTSWANA

### Xigera Camp Configuration Change for 2017

From the beginning of 2017, Xigera will operate with 8 twins and 1 family (a total of 9 rooms/20 beds) – no longer 9 twins and 1 family (a total of 10 rooms/22 beds).

### Xigera Camp Refurbishment

Herewith some images of the recent softs refurbishments at Xigera, adding some lovely splashes of colour and pieces of new furniture. It is looking fabulous and guests are responding very favourably to the changes!



## NAMIBIA

### Parking of Vehicles at Doro Nawas Camp

Self-drive guests who are flying to Hoanib (irrespective of whether they are staying at Doro Nawas pre or post Hoanib) must park their vehicles in the parking bay at Doro Nawas Camp and not at the airstrip. Guests will then be transferred between the camp and the airstrip on a complimentary basis.

#### **Rhino Tracking - Desert Rhino Camp & Andersson's Camp**

- Due to Save the Rhino Trust regulations, the rhino tracking at Desert Rhino cannot be offered or secured/booked on a private basis.
- Rhino tracking is not offered at all from Andersson's.

#### **SEYCHELLES**

##### **UPDATE | Helicopter Transfers**

- The recommended time for clients to connect from an international flight to a helicopter transfer is around 2 hours. This allows for Fast Track assistance, baggage clearing and the possibility that the international flight may be delayed. Recently there have been a number of flight delays and clients have had to spend the first night on Mahe.
- Standard helicopter flights operate after sunrise and before sunset – so you need to allow for enough time. If the international flight arrival and departure time, plus the recommended connection time of 2 hours, does not coincide with the helicopter operation times, then overnight accommodation on Mahe either on arrival or departure will be required.

#### **ZIMBABWE**

##### **Sunset Cruise Times**

As of 1 September 2015, the Ra-ikane cruise times are 16:30 to 18:30. Pick-up times have been adjusted accordingly.

##### **Boiling Pot & Gorge Hike Minimum Number**

Note that the minimum number for the above activities is 4.

##### **UPDATE | New Victoria Falls Airport**

The builders are still hopeful that it will be finished in the next few months, however, we think it will be closer to January 2016:

- The main structure facing the apron has been completed with the exception of the two air way towers for guests to use as walkways to the planes.
- The control tower is nearing completion.
- The fire station is being built.
- The car park has been graded, however, there is no tarmac as yet.
- Interiors have commenced – tiling, roofing, etc.

#### **AIRLINES**

##### **Air Namibia Cancels Selected Flights during Festive Season**

Air Namibia has cancelled selected Domestic, Regional and Intercontinental flights during the festive season from 20 December 2015 to 18 January 2016 due to low demand.

##### **Proflight Launches Lusaka – Durban Flights**

Proflight Zambia will start direct flights from Lusaka to Durban later this month as part of their strategy to expand across Southern Africa and make Lusaka a hub for air travel throughout the region. Proflight will fly three times a week between Lusaka and Durban from September 22 using its 50-seater CRJ-100 aircraft. Flight P0024 will depart Lusaka at 11:00 on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays arriving in Durban at 13:30, while the returning P0025 will depart Durban at 14:10 the same day, to arrive back in Lusaka at 16:40.

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Warm regards,  
Tina

#### **Wilderness Product Manager**

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For further information on Wilderness product or rates, please refer to the Information Centre on the Wilderness Window or contact either myself [tinak@wilderness.co.za](mailto:tinak@wilderness.co.za) or your reservations cluster/Journey Specialist directly.

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

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