



27 September 2017

NEWSFLASH

Zimbabwe Runs Out of Kaza Unvisa Stickers

Zimbabwe has run out of KAZA Unvisa stickers at all entry points. Harare International Airport, Victoria Falls International Airport, the Kazungula Border (Botswana) and the Victoria Falls Border (bridge between Zambia/Zimbabwe), are unable to issue the visa. Until the situation is resolved, tourists visiting Zimbabwe who require visas must obtain the standard visa – whether single entry (U\$30.00), double entry (U\$45.00) or multiple entry (U\$55.00, and supported by a letter). *Reminder: Zambia ran out of stickers few weeks ago and has suspended issuing the KAZA Unvisa. Zambian single and double entry visas are available at ports of entry.*

Delays at Windhoek Airport

Please be aware that the implementation of new biometric screening at Hosea Kutako International Airport has resulted in long queues and delays on arrival and departure. Namibia Airports Company (NAC), along with the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Namibian Police, ground handlers and all stakeholders are working together to try and improve the situation - "We apologise for any inconvenience caused and we ask the travelling public to bear with us during this transition stage."

Plastic Bags Banned in Kenya (& Rwanda)

Plastic bags are banned in Kenya for environmental reasons and visitors are asked to avoid bringing them into the country – whether in suitcases or as carry-on. Being in possession of a plastic bag is considered an offence and violators may be penalised. For liquids in hand luggage, travellers should make use of transparent toilet bags. Items bought at airports should be removed from plastic bags before boarding flights to Kenya. Duty-free plastic shop bags are not allowed and must be left on the plane or in the terminal building on arrival in Kenya. We have updated our collateral as relevant. *Note that the same is already in place in Rwanda: Rwanda is a polythene-free country. For environmental reasons, plastic bags have been banned, the customary plastic duty-free bags included.*

New Vehicles at Vumbura Plains

We are in the process of replacing all the vehicles at Vumbura Plains. They have a fridge in place of the front seat (may be replaced with a normal seat should a guest like to sit next to the guide) plus consoles down the middle (3 rows of 2 seats), all of which may be replaced by normal seats. The side of the vehicle opens into the front row, with a little step to make it easier to get in and out.

Mombo Photographic Vehicle No Longer Available

The photographic vehicle at Mombo is unfortunately no longer available, as the design was proving unsuccessful. Although it could not be booked in advance, and was on a request basis only, please notify guests who asked for it specifically prior to their arrival at Mombo.

Fires in the Central Kalahari

An extensive bush fire in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve earlier this month, both in and surrounding our concession prompted the temporary closure of Kalahari Plains Camp for the latter half of September. The camp is fine although the game viewing area was damaged and would not provide a quality experience over these last couple of weeks. Closed already for the first three weeks of October to carry out airstrip maintenance, Kalahari Plains will reopen on 25 October, by which time the first flushes of green will have appeared and wildlife will have moved back into the area to take advantage of all the new shoots. This does bode well for a summer visit to Kalahari Plains between December and May since it is going to be a bumper season around the camp and in Deception Valley - with thousands of springbok, oryx and other species responding to the new grass, and predators hot on their tails.

Gunotsoga Village Visit ex Vumbura on Hold

We have put a temporary hold on the Gunotsoga Village Tour due to the current experience not meeting expectations for both Wilderness Safaris and our guests. The operations team are in the process of assessing the excursion and engaging with the community so we will keep you updated. In the interim, our suggestion would be to book a scenic helicopter flight or balloon experience (depending on date of travel) as an alternative.

IMPORTANT

Family Room at the new Mombo

When the new Mombo camp opens in February 2018, we will have a family room. The second room is smaller than the main room although it does form part of the greater room structure, and the entrance, deck and pool are shared while each room has their own bathroom. The configuration of the camp remains 9 rooms with 8 twins and 1 family.

Note that as we believe Mombo to more of an adult type camp/experience, the child policy at Mombo will differ to our other camps. In a nutshell:

1. No children 12 years and younger will be accepted at Mombo Main or Little Mombo.
2. The exception to this rule is only when sole use of Little Mombo is booked, securing exclusive use of a vehicle.
3. Families with children 13 years and older are welcome at Mombo Main. Between the ages of 13 and 16 years, they need to share a room with an adult.
4. Irrespective of age, the full adult rate applies to all children up to the age of 16 years staying at Mombo – whether staying in standard rooms or the family room, or when booking sole use of Little Mombo with younger children.

Please contact your Journey Specialist or refer to our General Information Manual for further details.

Itinerary Change to the Hwange Walking Safari for 2018

There is no change to the rates nor departure dates, however, we have adjusted the itinerary of our Hwange Walking Safari for the 2018 season.

Old itinerary - 2017

- Day 1: Davison's Camp, Linkwasha Concession, Hwange.
- Day 2: Scott's Pan Platform, Linkwasha Concession.
- Day 3: Ngamo Plains, Linkwasha Concession.
- Day 4: Linkwasha Camp, Linkwasha Concession.
- Day 5: Transfer to Linkwasha Airstrip for onward arrangements.

New itinerary - 2018

- Day 1: Davison's Camp, Linkwasha Concession, Hwange.
- Day 2 & 3: Ngamo Plains, Linkwasha Concession.
- Day 4: Linkwasha Camp, Linkwasha Concession.
- Day 5: Transfer to Linkwasha Airstrip for onward arrangements.

Payment Conversion

To lessen the impact of foreign exchange conversions, payments received should match the currency of our invoice or statement. When making payment, please ensure that the instruction "DO NOT CONVERT" is added to your wire instruction. If paying in foreign currency such as US\$ and Euro, the financial institution who receives the payment from your bank is converting this amount to ZAR before paying Wilderness Safaris which results in shortfalls. This conversion is generally done by the payer's bank or the intermediary bank, but not by our bank. The instruction would therefore have to come from the payer to the payer's bank, who in turn would give instruction to the intermediary bank (who does the conversion).

CORRECTION | Revised Pilot/Guide Room Rates

With effect from August 2017, (not 11 January 2018 as previously communicated) the pilot/guide rates at all Wilderness Safaris camps were adjusted and standardised across board according to currency quoted:

- Namibia & Rocktail in South Africa = NAD/ZAR 1000.00 nett per person, per night
- Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia = US\$ 100.00 nett per person, per night.

REMINDER

Guest Lounge in Maun

Our guest lounge at the Wilderness Safaris offices in Maun is a very comfortable space with air-con, Wi-Fi, bathroom facilities, TV and wine bar. There is an outside seating area plus a restaurant next door for meals. Should guests have to spend time in Maun between flights, our team on the ground will meet/escort guests to the lounge. In the near future we will be getting a vehicle to shuttle guests to the lounge in the heat or if they need to go to a pharmacy, etc.

RATES

Windhoek Meet & Greet Rates Increase

Please note that the Meet & Greet fee at Windhoek International Airport increases from 01 October 2017, applicable to all new bookings. We will honour existing bookings at the old rates for the period 01 October 2017 to 10 January 2018.

PRIVATE JOURNEYS – CAPE

Zeitz MOCAA opened 22 September 2017

The Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA) is the first major museum in Africa dedicated to contemporary art from Africa and its diaspora. As a public not-for-profit contemporary art museum it will collect, preserve, research, and exhibit twenty-first century art. With guaranteed access for all, it will also host international exhibitions; develop supporting educational and enrichment programmes and encourage intercultural understanding. There are over one hundred galleries, spread over nine floors, which are dedicated to large permanent collections; temporary exhibitions; and Centres for Art Education, Curatorial Excellence, Performative Practice, Photography, the Moving Image, and the Costume Institute.

WILDERNESS TOURING & TRANSFERS – ZAMBEZI

FEATURED EXCURSION | Historic Tour of Livingstone

This interesting two hour walking and driving tour around Livingstone, covers the history of the town and takes in the first school, hospital, library, sports club, churches, the High Court and the old North-Western Hotel. The railway reached Victoria Falls in 1904 while the bridge was completed in 1905. Thereafter the town moved from the Old Drift at the river to the current site at Constitution Hill. In 1907, Livingstone became the capital of then-Northern Rhodesia and remained so until 1935 when Lusaka became the capital. Although planned well, the town was split - the railway workers living at the bottom of the hill and the administrators and business people at the top of the hill, and the two rarely mixed.

WILDERNESS AIR

Update on Wilderness Air Botswana (WAB)

- Using seat rates to travel between Kasane and Kalahari Plains on the same day, or vice versa, may take up to 6 hours, with multiple stops. If you must book this connection, please do so on a sole aircraft use basis only.
- Although on paper the Livingstone/Victoria Falls/Kasane connections between air and road appear too short, please rest assured that WAB and Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe make it work on the ground.
- There are NO scheduled flying times except for Area 4/Zambezi Triangle and the Maun/Kalahari Plains route.
- WAB is now using minibuses for transfers on the apron between the terminal building and aircraft.
- New Wilderness Air re-packing bags are available in Maun and Kasane for guests who arrive with incorrect bags or too much luggage. There is no charge, based on the understanding the bags are returned at the end of the safari.
- For any last-minute bookings – placed within 2 weeks prior to departure – your Journey Specialists must contact Operations FIRST, before confirming any flying and costs.

BOTSWANA

Abu & Seba Update

- Mosquito nets have been installed at Seba Camp.
- Walkways at Abu & Seba Camps: new wooden walkways at Abu are now complete, while those at Seba are nearing completion. Per the image below, the new raised walkway at Abu allows for easier movement and reduces the camp's footprint plus impact on the immediate habitat. In both camps, the walkways are elevated for the most part with some sections on the ground to allow for animal movement.



Water Activity Update

- **Seba:** Water levels are very low so boating will cease shortly. Mokoro excursions are still fine.
- **Abu:** We are no longer doing boat cruises. One boat is now in the lagoon in front of camp to offer fishing.
- **Xigera:** Water levels continue to drop so in the next couple of weeks, boats will be relocated to the boat station 45 minutes away from camp. Mokoro excursions continue as normal.
- **Jao Camp:** Still offering boating and mokoro activities - the boat station is now at the back of the island and the mokoro station is a 25 minute drive from camp. Trips to Hunda Island involve a 35 minute drive followed by a 15 minute boat shuttle to Hunda (applies to Kwetsani too).

- **Kwetsani Camp:** Limited boating and normal mokoro activities - the boat station is 5 minutes out of camp however, some channels are very low so boat access is limited, while the mokoro station is 10 minutes from camp.
- **Tubu Tree/Little Tubu:** Limited boating (may cease in a few weeks) and normal mokoro activities - the boat station is 35 minutes from camp and the mokoro station 20 minutes.
- **Jacana Camp:** Still offering full boating and mokoro activities from camp
- **Pelo Camp:** Still offering full boating and mokoro activities from camp – however transfers to and from the airstrip involve a 40 minute drive and 5 minute boat trip.

NAMIBIA

Quad Bikes and Electric "Fat" Bikes

- Quad bikes are available from Little Kulala and Serra Cafema only and included as a standard activity in the FI rate. Bookings are made in camp only and are subject to availability. Note that the Little Kulala quad bikes may NOT be booked for guests at Kulala Desert Lodge or Kulala Adventurer Camp.
- Our new electric "Fat" Bikes are available from Kulala Desert Lodge **only**, at an additional cost. All bookings are made in camp, subject to availability, and costs settled directly.

SOUTH AFRICA

Guide Rate for Activities at Rocktail Camp

- If there are less than 10 guests in a group, the guide will pay full price on the Lake Sibaya and Village tours. If there are more than 10 guests, then the guide will be charged 50% of the rate.
- No matter what size the group is, the guide is charged the full price for the turtle drive excursion.

SEYCHELLES

North Island Extend Summer Stay Pay Deal

North Island have introduced a new Stay 4 Pay 3 deal for the summer! Valid for all new bookings travelling between 01 September and 15 December 2017, book four nights and only pay for three! The offer is cumulative, so for 8 nights booked within the relevant period, 2 would be free of charge; for 12 nights, 3 would be free of charge and so on!

ZIMBABWE

Road Transfer & Self-Drive Access to Hwange

Note that the drive from Victoria Falls to Hwange is approximately three hours long and then it is a further two and a half drive from Hwange Main Camp to our camps – allowing for the changeover and sightings en-route, **it is a minimum six-hour journey!** For this reason and because we do not have the flexibility of additional vehicles and guides to accommodate transfers at all hours, we have put the following parameters in place:

Transfers

- There is one scheduled transfer per day from Victoria Falls to Hwange, departing at 10:00 and arriving Hwange Main Camp at approximately 12:30. There are two scheduled transfers per day from Hwange Main Camp to Victoria Falls - departing at 09:00 and 12:30. Additional costs apply to the 09:00 departure, as a private vehicle needs to be booked and charged for, to leave camp between 05:00 and 06:00 in the morning.
- For itineraries combining Wilderness Safaris and Associated Product camps in Hwange National Park, Hwange Main Camp is the standard communal meeting point at the times mentioned above.
- We cannot do a road transfer to Hwange Main Camp (for collection and onward transfer) off the SAA or BA flights arriving into Victoria Falls due to the duration of the transfer and the opening/closing times of the park gate. Note that this is specific either to the Wilderness Camps or for Somalisa/The Hide/Camelthorn Lodge located in the south-east.

Self-drives

- Guests wishing to travel on a self-drive basis to Davison's Camp, Little Makalolo or Linkwasha in Hwange, may drive directly onto our concession in 4x4 vehicles only. All guests must arrive at Davison's Camp by 12:00 - the ONLY meeting and parking point. Those guests continuing to Linkwasha and Little Makalolo are met at Davison's and transferred by Wilderness vehicles to the relevant camp.
- When travelling in 2x4 vehicles, parking is at Hwange Main Camp only. The transfer pick-up time is 12:30 and parking costs of USD 5.00 per day (subject to change) are settled direct with the park authorities at Hwange Main Camp. If transfers are required at any other time, then a private vehicle is required.

AIRLINES & AIRPORTS

Ethiopian Airlines Introduces Daily Cape Town Service

From 12 September 2017, Ethiopian Airlines increased its current once a week flight on its Cape Town-Addis Ababa route to a daily operation.

European Low-cost Airline to Launch Cape Town Flights

Eurowings, a low-cost carrier that is part of the Lufthansa Group, will launch flights between Cologne and Cape Town on 5 November 2017. This follows the launch of flights between Cologne and Windhoek in July 2017.

British Airways to launch direct flights to Seychelles

From 24 March 2018, customers will be able to fly direct from Heathrow Terminal 5 to the Seychelles, making British Airways the only airline offering a non-stop service from the UK. Twice weekly flights will operate between March and October, utilising the airline's newest fleet of aircraft, the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner.

Sector	Day of week	Departure time	Arrival time
LHR to SEZ	Wednesday and Saturday	17:50	07:00
SEZ to LHR	Thursday and Sunday	09:00	16:20

New Low-cost French Carrier, Joon, to fly to Seychelles.

Joon, Air France's 'millennial focused' low-cost carrier, has announced a long-haul route to Mahé, Seychelles, from May 2018. The flight will operate three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays using A340s and A350s. Food and drink menus (serving organic and non-organic fare) and entertainment systems will be available on board.

Cheers

Tina

Wilderness Product Manager



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