



MARISKA NEETHLING

Wilderness Safaris EU Sales Manager

With over 13 years' experience in both the leisure and corporate travel industry, Mariska brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her new role as Wilderness Safaris EU Sales Manager.

After completing her honours degree in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality in 2007 at the North-West University in Potchefstroom, Mariska began her career in the hotel industry, working in the events and incentives departments while also gaining destination management experience.

However, it was while working as an incentive travel manager and she started going on safari that the "bush bug" bit, exciting a passion to explore untouched wilderness areas and the desire to steer her career towards ecotourism.

She joined Wilderness Safaris in 2016 as a Senior Journey Specialist, creating private, life-changing journeys for Wilderness Safaris' Explorations Department. She worked closely with one of the company's largest agents, based in the USA, to grow both their FIT business, as well as their series division, which enjoyed record-breaking growth for the company within two years.

Mariska has also travelled extensively in southern Africa, as well as to most Wilderness Safaris camps, hosting guests on privately guided journeys, together with Wilderness Safaris' renowned Private Guides. For Mariska, the best part of creating these impactful journeys for her guests is seeing them experience an African safari for the first time. As she says, "Being with my guests in the wilderness when they see their first elephant or lion is priceless!

"Community and conservation are also close to my heart", she continues, "and working for Wilderness Safaris, I know that we do everything we can to secure the future of the communities in all the areas we operate in, as well as the most endangered wildlife species – for generations to come. I am particularly proud of the work we are doing to protect both white and black rhino, which were reintroduced in Botswana in 2016, with the population showing encouraging growth each year".

In addition to her in-depth understanding of all southern African destinations, Mariska has sealed many friendships and partnerships in the industry over the years. Relationships are key to Mariska, and no request is ever too big or too small for her and her team to handle. She has an exceptional eye for detail, and is meticulous in planning, with precision and care, for our trade partners. Mariska is very excited about taking on her new role, and looks forward to building on current relationships with trade partners, as well as establishing new relationships as we emerge from the current challenges our industry is facing.

When she is not hard at work, Mariska spends her free time travelling, as much as possible on safari, but also enjoying her hobbies, which include wildlife photography and birding.

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