



LINKWASHA CAMP

PR Update: July 2015

We are delighted to announce that after only being open for two months, Linkwasha Camp has already been featured as the **3rd Best New Lodge** in The Times UK and Ireland's 20 Best Safari Camps in the world.

We are also proud to report that Linkwasha Camp has already generated over **120 media articles** worldwide to date, including 62 articles in 2014 and 58 in 2015, as of 7 July. This has further entrenched our brand as Africa's leading ecotourism operator and generated renewed interest for both Zimbabwe and Hwange as a top travel destination.

The following articles are a few highlights of coverage received to date, including feature articles, small mentions, snippets and online pieces. In addition to the clips already received, we have recently hosted many of the world's A-list journalists from esteemed publications such as Robb Report, Condé Nast Traveller and Forbes, to name a few, and foresee many more feature articles to be published in the coming months.



GRIFCO

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AFAR

THE EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL GUIDE

Where to Go in 2015: Zimbabwe

COLLECTED BY [AFAR MAGAZINE](#) | AFAR EDITOR



*With four UNESCO World Heritage sites, exotic wildlife, huge waterfalls, and a rich cultural heritage, Zimbabwe is definitely on our travel to-do list. When AFAR asked Keith Vincent, co-founder of outfitter **Wilderness Safaris** where he wants to go in 2015, he confirmed our sentiments. "Zimbabwe is definitely back on the map and we are extremely excited about its tourism potential; so much so, that we will be launching a new luxury camp in Hwange in May 2015 called Linkwasha.*

[BEGIN SLIDESHOW >](#)

7 SLIDES

Robb Report

Sneak Peek: Linkwasha Camp, Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe



Jennifer Ashton Ryan

JUNE 11, 2015

The reopening of **Linkwasha Camp** brings Botswana-level luxury to Zimbabwe's Hwange park for the first time.

Why Go: Home to one of the densest concentrations of game in Africa, the 86-year-old Hwange National Park is a worthy destination for safari goers. But the Zimbabwe destination has largely remained off the beaten path due to poor accessibility and a lack of high-end camps. The reopening of **Wilderness Safaris** Linkwasha Camp changes the equation, offering visitors the quality of high-end Botswana camps.

What to Expect: Eight oversize safari tents (from \$550 per person, all-inclusive) at Linkwasha are equipped with king-size beds facing glass sliding doors and views of the local waterhole frequented by wildlife. A couch, workspace, and en suite bathroom complete the tents' interiors. Linkwasha's one family tent is similar but with multiple bedrooms. Spread across several multilevel decks, common areas allow guests space to swim, dine, warm up beside the wood-burning fireplaces, talk, and read under the light of funky pendant lights. In the winter months, visitors venture out by Land Rover or by foot to track lions, elephants, buffalo, leopards, spotted hyenas, giraffes, and more. In the summer months on the nearby Ngamo Plains—which are better for summer game viewing—elephants crowd waterholes while zebras and eland graze on the open plains. Year-round, night and evening drives can yield leopard, bush baby, and pangolin sightings.

How to Get There: In August, a new airport will open at Victoria Falls with direct service to Zimbabwe by international carriers—meaning, many travelers can bypass a normally mandatory stop in Johannesburg. Wilderness Safaris-owned Wilderness Air will transport Linkwasha guests from the falls (which is a four-hour drive by car) directly to the camp. (wilderness-safaris.com)

Wilderness Safaris' Linkwasha Camp Opens in Zimbabwe

May 1, 2015 -



Wilderness Safaris Linkwasha Camp officially opens today in a private concession of the southeast corner of Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe.

The camp, located in close proximity to the famed Ngamo Plains, provides travelers with exceptional wildlife viewing year-round and offers a level of luxury that can't be found elsewhere.

"The opening of Linkwasha Camp further solidifies Wilderness Safaris' commitment to the destination," says Wilderness Safaris CEO Keith Vincent. "Our dedication is based on our tremendous belief in Zimbabwe as a major player in Africa's tourism industry, and we are confident that the exceptional wildlife experience and level of luxury we are offering will position Linkwasha Camp as a firm favorite amongst our guests."

Situated in a private, wildlife-rich concession in Zimbabwe's renowned Hwange National Park, Linkwasha Camp will offer the most luxurious accommodations in the area, with eight en-suite double or twin tents and one family tent, for a total of 18 guests. Linkwasha Camp's architect, Joy Brasler, designed the camp to maximize privacy while maintaining a sense of openness that allows for superb views of the nearby Pan.

Characterized by its light environmental footprint, Linkwasha Camp blends seamlessly into the surrounding landscape and allows for natural cooling cross-breezes and maximum light penetration to keep energy requirements low. Each tent is fashioned with an eclectic mix of contemporary interiors and feature private verandas, ceiling fans and outdoor showers. Overlooking a bountiful waterhole, the camp has a welcoming dining area and a cozy library with indoor fireplace, perfect for cool evenings while watching elephants arrive for a drink.

"With the increasing visitor demand for Zimbabwe, we want to offer our partners and guests a more exclusive option in Hwange National Park," says Tendai Mdluli, Wilderness Safaris' Trade Relationship Manager in Zimbabwe. "Our approach has always been to offer outstanding experiences in the best wildlife destinations in Africa and the Linkwasha Concession in Hwange is no exception; in fact, it is one of the most abundant areas in the entire park."

The concession's savannah grassland habitat is the ideal environment for guests to enjoy guided safari walks and game drives where they may encounter large herds of elephant and buffalo, prides of lion, leopard, spotted hyaena, giraffe, sable, blue wildebeest, Burchell's zebra, waterbuck and reedbuck. Hwange is similarly a hotspot for birders, with more than 400 species found in the area. Other activities include visits to the Ngamo community, enjoying fresh "out-of-the-oven" pizzas and sundowners in the bush. Travelers can also spend a night under the stars at a nearby "Star Bed."

This will be Wilderness Safaris' fourth camp in Hwange, complementing Little Makalolo, Ruckomechi Camp and Davison's Camp. Travelers who stay three consecutive nights or longer at Linkwasha Camp, along with Davison's Camp, Little Makalolo or Ruckomechi Camp, will receive a 50% discount on Wilderness Air flights between these camps and the Victoria Falls/Hwange area, to complete their stay in Zimbabwe.

Visit website: <http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/camps/linkwasha-camp>

First Look: Linkwasha Safari Lodge



Wilderness Safaris is betting big on wildlife lovers coming to see some of the best game in Africa in **Zimbabwe's** Hwange National Park. Their just-opened luxury camp Linkwasha sits in a private concession so rich with game that during my recent visit we saw in our first twenty-four hours what others would be lucky to see in two weeks. Some of the highlights were catching a pregnant hippo out of the water; taking a bush walk with the guide who is ranked #3 in all of Africa into a breeding herd of elephants; watching a cheetah take down a waterbuck as we sat at lunch; and spending more than an hour with a mother lion and her cubs. We even saw a rare leopard tortoise and a shooting star by the Southern Cross.

Sitting on grassy plains that reminded me of East Africa, the nine-tent camp features lounge, dining and library tents that are surrounded by wide decks on different levels with a small infinity pool at one end a fire pit that is perfect for post-dinner chats or cocktails. The decor within the army green tents exemplifies 21st-century safari chic. Comfy couches mix with modern leather safari chairs and copper drum tables; while local crafts like woven baskets and wood carvings have been given a contemporary twist. In the dining tents the pendant lights have shades that resemble overturned woven palm baskets with unfinished edges and placemats hand-beaded by local tribeswomen. In the guest tents, raffia rugs cover the wooden floors and beds are draped with mosquito nets, but there's a sleek edge to the interiors and even the deck furniture that faces the pan and its endless parade of wildlife.

Wilderness has brought some of the best of their team here so despite the fact that it is brand-new the old hands running the camp make you feel instantly welcomed into a family. If Linkwasha is the sign of what is to come in Zimbabwe tourism, then Botswana is in for some serious competition, and at a much better price.

A full Zimbabwe Destination Report with camp reviews and a cheat sheet on how best to see Victoria Falls will post soon.

DEPARTURES

May 13, 2015

May Hotel and Travel Spotlight



© Marco Beck Peccoz

May-2015

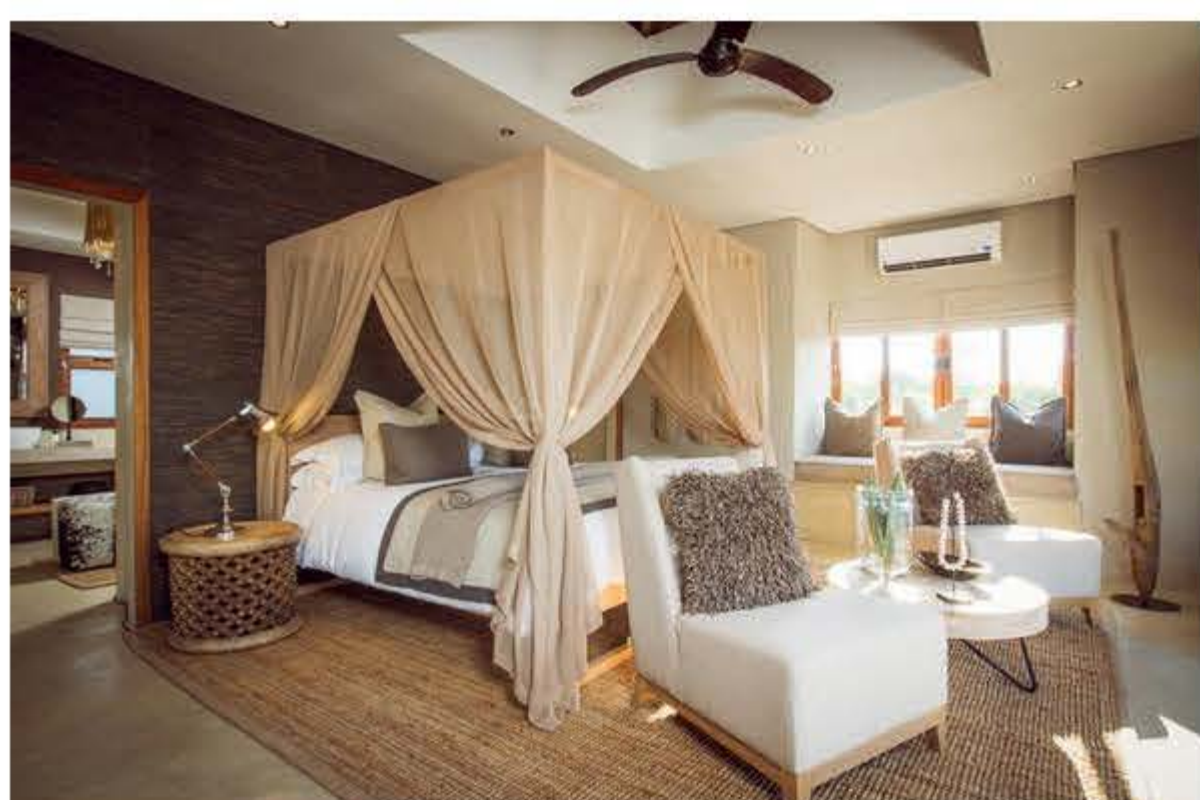
New hotels to book, seasonal packages, and more news of note to help you plan your travels this month.

AFRICA

Observe African wildlife in Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe from the comfort of **Wilderness Safaris's** brand-new digs at **Linkwasha Camp**. The site, which opened May 1 for its first season, has tents that can accommodate up to 18 people and are arranged around a cozy dining area and library. *From \$550.*

Sabi Sabi, a private game reserve in South Africa, launched its new **Bush Lodge Luxury Villas** on May 1. The handsome villas—which each come with a game vehicle, ranger, and tracker—are comprised of two bedrooms, a plunge pool, patio, two bathrooms, lounge, and library. The bedrooms are outfitted with four poster beds and hide-covered chairs; the bathrooms feature rain showers, his and hers vanities, and side-by-side bathtubs all featuring colors and textures of the surrounding wilderness. *From \$1,250 per person; 27-13/735-5656.*

On May 1, the Encounter Mara camp in Kenya joined the **Asilia Africa** portfolio of luxe camps and lodges. The permanent, new camp is located in the Mara Naboisho Conservancy, an area known for its populations of elephants, wildebeest, lions, zebras, and cheetahs. The reserve is relatively unsettled, with only a few lodges thus far. Encounter Mara camp has 10 tents with traditional bush showers and private verandas, and the camp's lounge area offers unadulterated views of the Serengeti. *Naboisho Conservancy, Kenya; 27-21/418-0468.*



NORTH AMERICA

This month, **Wauwinet Inn** in Nantucket expands their accommodations to include a previously private home nearby: The Anchorage House, which features three bedrooms, two decks, and landscaped gardens, and is decorated like a classic local cottage, with interior design by New England interior designer Donna Elle. Two beaches and the Relais & Châteaux hotel's award-winning restaurant, Topper's, are close, and Anchorage House guests have full access to the amenities offered at the main inn, including lobster outings, tennis courts, and kayaks. *From \$1,800; 120 Wauwinet Rd.; 800-475-2637.*

Lovers of art and fashion will find the perfect combination of the two at **WestHouse Hotel** during New York's Frieze art fair, from May 14—May 17. Guests who stay at the property for the weekend will receive round-trip car service to Randall's Island, where the fair is held, as well as \$500 gift cards from Net-A-Porter and access to the e-commerce site's personal shoppers. *From \$2,730; 201 W. 55th St.; 800-355-9378.*

The **Broadmoor** hotel in Colorado Springs expands its Wilderness Experience offerings this month to offer in-house fly-fishing excursions hosted on-site, as well as at their Fishing Camp nearby on the Tarryall River. Led by the property's own experts, the guided trips in pursuit of Rainbow trout include transportation, lunch, and top-of-the-line equipment. (Other outdoor adventures offered at the Broadmoor include falconry, rock climbing, mountain biking, and hiking.) *1 Lake Ave.; 800-755-5011.*

The **St. Regis Mexico City** expands its Cultural Curator service to include a personal shopping concierge and guided tours of Mexico City's best boutiques. The shopping concierge, led by local stylist Marco Corral, brings fashions from Carolina Herrera, Tory Burch, Michael Kors, and Louis Vuitton right to the guest's hotel room. The tours will center on the Condesa-Roma district, where visitors can peruse offerings from emerging contemporary Mexican designers. *From \$170 per hour; Paseo de la Reforma 439; 51-55/5228-1818.*

Travelers looking for a hotel experience that lets them enjoy the best of New York City's spring weather can now book terraced suites at the **Quin Hotel** in midtown, which recently completed its 17th floor renovation. The five suites and three-floor penthouse have expansive outdoor terraces, with views of Central Park and the skyline. Guests who stay at the Quin's new terrace suites or the penthouse are eligible Quin Select, a service created for the new addition, which includes one of four extras, courtesy of the hotel: a couple's spa treatment, a \$300 dining credit, a personal training session, or a \$300 gift card to Bergdorf Goodman. *From \$2,000; 101 W. 57th St.; 212-245-7846.*



EUROPE

Aman Sveti Stefan in Montenegro reopened for the season on May 1. Located on the historic and charming island of Sveti Stefan, the Aman Resorts property is renowned for its spa (treatments incorporate locally grown herbs), sandy beaches along the Adriatic Coast, and proximity to beautiful woods, architecture, and wineries. There is also a fitness center, multiple open-air Mediterranean dining options, and pools overlooking the sea. *From \$650; Villa Milocer; 382-33/420-000.*

A redesigned **La Vela Beach Club** opens this month adjacent to Cala del Porto in Italy on the Tuscan coast after extensive renovations. The Club features views of the Tuscan Archipelago, a spa, gym, solarium, and Turkish bath house. There is also a terrace, a Mediterranean restaurant, and a beachside bar. *Via Dogana 6; 39-0564/072-001.*

Situated on Lago Maggiore in Ascona, Switzerland, **Hotel Eden Roc's** redesign, helmed by Swiss architect and interior designer Carlo Rampazzi, will debut this spring with 30 new lakeside rooms. Guests will be able to choose among several design styles when selecting rooms. *From \$530; Via Albarelle 16; 41-91/785-71-71.*

ASIA

On May 15, JW Marriott Hotels and Resorts opens on the **Bodrum Peninsula**, the brand's second property in Turkey. The new hotel, set beside the Aegean Sea, has 107 rooms and seven private villas. Dining options include a grill, coffee lounge, and beach bar, the spa include a salt room and traditional Turkish baths. Guests can take part in the property's many nearby activities and attractions: visits to ancient ruins, diving expeditions, and sailing on the Mediterranean. *Rooms from \$445; Geris Mahallesi, Erdemil Caddesi No. 49; 90-252/388-6660.*

The Jumeirah Group expanded in Turkey's Aegean coast on May 1 with its second location in the country, the **Bodrum Palace Hotel**. The hotel, located in Zeytinlikahve Cove, offers suites and villas with views of the Aegean sea (many also have private pools). High-end shopping, a spa, restaurants, and bars can also be found on the property, with dining options that range from traditional Lebanese cuisine to Italian and fresh seafood. *From \$273; 90-252/444-7789.*

The Hotel Report: Fairmont Kea Lani's Facelift; Zimbabwe's Hot New Safari Camp

Written by John Wogan
February 23, 2015



Courtesy Fairmont Kea Lani

Your weekly roundup of the best of what's new, what's coming up, and what we can't wait for in the world of hotels, from Condé Nast Traveler hotels expert John Wogan.

The Perennial

Maui favorite [Fairmont Kea Lani](#), in Wailea, just completed its \$70 million renovation across the entire 22-acre property, including top-to-bottom updates of all 413 suites and 37 two-story villas, a new, 9,000 square foot Willow Stream Spa and a \$5.1 million rebuild of its signature restaurant, Ko.

On Our Radar

Wilderness Safaris is opening their newest camp in what many consider the next big destination in Africa—Zimbabwe. Linkwasha Camp is located in the country's largest game reserve, Hwange National Park, and will consist of eight large and luxurious canvas tents, alongside communal areas with fireplaces and wraparound decks (ideal spots for viewing the area's hundreds of elephants, buffalo, lions, zebras and wildebeests).

We're Watching

Austin's largest hotel has just opened. The 34-story, 1,012-room JW Marriott is riding a wave of development in the Texas capital, which is seeing tremendous hotel growth right now. The mega-hotel has earned LEED Silver certification and will have a rooftop swimming pool, three restaurants and is in walking distance of the State Capital building and Lady Bird Lake.

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WORD OF MOUTH

GAME PLAN

After years in the tourism wilderness, Zimbabwe is back in the frame

As Rhodesia in the 1960s and 70s, this landlocked Southern African country was boycotted thanks to its bombastic white rulers. After independence in 1980, however, it swiftly became a tourist honeypot, hailed for its beauty and exceptional safari guides, considered to be the best and bravest in all of Africa. Everything changed around the millennium when President Mugabe unleashed his henchmen, followed by complete economic collapse. But with the US dollar providing some stability after being adopted as currency, there's a feeling things are moving in the right direction. This month, Wilderness Safaris opens Linkwasha, the sleekest safari camp seen in a generation, in a private concession in Hwange National Park, and by summer the rickety airport at Victoria Falls will emerge from a huge, Chinese-backed overhaul as a potentially powerful regional hub. In the capital, Harare, smart little guest houses such as Wavell House Private Guest Lodge are once again doing respectable business and spectacular Gonarezhou National Park, down in the south on the Mozambique border, looks like it's back on track with the recent addition of Chilo Gorge Safari Lodge and a fresh litter of family-run bush camps. PETER BROWNE Wilderness Safaris' Linkwasha Camp; www.wildernesssafaris.com. Doubles from £640

The 20 best safari camps

Article

In pictures



Sue Watt

Published at 12:01AM, July 4 2015

Prices are per person per night, based on double occupancy and include food, drinks, taxes, park fees, guiding and game activities, unless stated. You can often get cheaper deals as part of a package.

Best new lodge

3. Linkwasha, Zimbabwe

After years of economic turmoil, Zimbabwe is firmly back on the safari radar. The Victoria Falls International Airport opens in September and high-end lodges are opening around the country. In Hwange National Park, Wilderness Safaris' ([wilderness-safaris.com](#)) luxurious Linkwasha Camp opened in May near the game-rich Ngamo Plains. It has eight vast tents with safari-chic decor overlooking a waterhole. There's a swimming pool in which to cool off, indoor dining and a library. More than 30,000 elephants migrate to and from Botswana through Hwange, making it a prime destination for elephant-spotters.

Details From £350-£560pp a night with Expert Africa ([expertafrica.com](#))

The 20 best safari camps

From a safari on the beach in Tanzania to a new tented camp in Zimbabwe, **Sue Watt** picks Africa's best places for game viewing

Prices are per person per night, based on double occupancy, and include food, drinks, taxes, park fees, guiding and game activities, unless otherwise stated. You can often get cheaper deals as part of a package.

Best on a budget

1 Flatdogs Zambia

Just outside the main gates of South Luangwa National Park, Flatdogs offers plenty of choice without costing a fortune. Accommodation ranges from comfortable safari tents to chalets and a cool JackalBerry Tree House built around ebony trees. The restaurant is à la carte, with plenty of local produce, and the bar is lively and friendly. Just across the river from the park, it offers the chance to see plenty of wildlife — elephants roam through the camp and slurp from the swimming pool. Game drives, night drives and walking safaris are available with Flatdogs' guides and vehicles which can be paid for ad hoc or as part of a package.

Details Safari tents cost from \$42pp per night (£27) room only, chalets from \$62 (£40) room only (flatdogscamp.com)

Best for rhinos

2 Phinda Homestead South Africa

There is abundant game at Phinda in KwaZulu-Natal, but it is best known as the home of rhino conservation. In 2004, 16 black rhinos were released here and have thrived. Guests at Phinda Homestead (andbeyond.com) can track black rhinos on foot with

expert rangers, and rhino capture-and-research safaris are available. Homestead is a stylish private four-bedroom villa — rent it for eight and it's less expensive than Phinda's Vlei Lodge. As well as your own butler and chef, you also get the services of a dedicated ranger and tracker, plus a safari vehicle.

Details From £364pp a night, with Steppes Travel (steppestravel.com)

Best new lodge

3 Linkwasha Zimbabwe

After years of economic turmoil, Zimbabwe is firmly back on the safari radar. The Victoria Falls international airport opens in September and high-end lodges are opening around the country. In Hwange National Park, Wilderness Safaris' (wilderness-safaris.com) luxurious **Linkwasha Camp** opened in May near the game-rich Ngamo Plains. It has eight vast tents with safari-chic decor overlooking a waterhole. There's a swimming pool in which to cool off, indoor dining and a library. More than 30,000 elephants migrate to and from Botswana through Hwange, making it a prime destination for elephant-spotters.

Details From £350-£560pp a night with Expert Africa (expertafrica.com) ▶



Best for luxury

4 Zarafa Dhow Suite Botswana

Zarafa Dhow Suite is the ultimate in safari indulgence: think *Out of Africa* then treble the style and elegance. In Botswana's private Selinda Reserve (greatplainsconservation.com), this exclusive-use villa is an annexe to the renowned Zarafa Camp. Owned by award-winning *National Geographic* film-makers Dereck and Beverly Joubert, it opened in May last year. With two suites around a central lounge and dining room, a private pool and terraces, and private staff, it has everything you could need for a glamorous safari and more besides, including digital SLR cameras, a selection of lenses and top-of-the-range Swarovski binoculars. If you can tear yourselves away from the suite, activities include walks, game drives, catch-and-release fishing and boat trips on the Zibadianja Lagoon. **Details** From £1,265pp a night with Safari Consultants (safari-consultants.com)

Best for the big five

5 &Beyond Ngorongoro Crater Lodge Tanzania

On Tanzania's popular Northern Circuit, the renowned Ngorongoro Crater is home to about 30,000 animals, including the "big five" — elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard — living in a vast caldera measuring more than 100 square miles and framed by a dramatic escarpment. Right on the rim of the crater with spectacular views, &Beyond

Ngorongoro Crater Lodge is one of the most sumptuous lodges in Africa, with swathes of silk and organza, crystal chandeliers and antiques, and a private butler. If you're on a budget, though, try Rhino Lodge, which has everything you need, with 24 simple en suite rooms around a central courtyard and a bright restaurant. Run by the Maasai, a proportion of the lodge profits go towards local community projects. **Details** &Beyond (andbeyond.com) costs from £600pp a night with Abercrombie & Kent

(abercrombiekent.co.uk). Rhino Lodge (ngorongoro.cc) costs from £86pp a night, excluding activities and park fees, with Expert Africa (expertafrica.com)

Best revived game park

6 Girassol Gorongosa Chitengo Mozambique

The only lodge in Gorongosa National Park (gorongosa.org), Chitengo hosted Hollywood superstars such as John Wayne and Gregory Peck in the Sixties in what was then Africa's top safari destination. By the mid Nineties, though, civil war had wreaked havoc, and 90 per cent of the wildlife was dead. A massive restoration project led by the American billionaire philanthropist Greg Carr is bringing this beautiful park back to life: elephants, wildebeest, buffalo and zebra have been reintroduced, the floodplains are full of game, tempting lions to return, and the birding here is superb. Accommodation ranges from luxury villas to thatched bungalows. **Details** From £130pp with Cedarberg Africa (cedarberg-travel.com)

Best for wildebeest

7 Namiri Plains Tanzania

Namiri Plains opened last summer on the eastern edge of the Serengeti, a pristine area closed for 20 years for big cat research. The only camp in the area, it is relaxed and unpretentious. Simply stylish with eight en suite tents, it's frequently visited by Goliath, the resident elephant. Perfectly situated for the great wildebeest migration, Namiri has access to this wildlife phenomenon for about four months of the year. Meaning "big cat" in Swahili, Namiri (namiriplains.asiliaafrica.com) is also a prime location for lions and cheetahs. Sixty lions have been seen in the area in the space of three days. The rest of the big five are here too, but rhinos are rare. **Details** From £210-£510pp, with Steppes Travel (www.steppestravel.com)

Best for photographers

8 Matamanene Camp Zambia

Liuwa Plain is extraordinarily beautiful, a

landscape of expansive golden plains interspersed with lily-strewn pools. Thousands of wildebeest and migrating birds, hyenas and cheetahs all have starring roles here in perfect photographic opportunities. The biggest star is Lady, a lioness made famous by a *National Geographic* documentary. She and four fellow lions can be tracked by GPS, offering potential for superb images. The only camp in the park, Matamanene (normancarrsafaris.com)

opened in May with five en suite tents. **Details** From £595pp, with Natural World Safaris (naturalworldsafaris.com). Four-day photographic safaris cost from £2,800pp including accommodation (edwardselfphotography.com)

Best-value exclusivity

9 Nambwa Tented Lodge Namibia

With the Namibian dollar linked to the weak South African rand, the country's exclusive lodges are excellent value for money. One of the newest is Nambwa (nambwalodge.com) in Bwabwata National Park. Unusually for Namibia,

Bwabwata, in the Zambezi region (previously the Caprivi Strip) is dominated by water, with lush wetlands and lagoons. On the banks of the Kwando River, Nambwa's ten luxury suites are spacious and stylish, built on wooden decks and walkways, some up to five metres high in the trees. Activities include game drives, walks and boat trips in this special, unspoilt destination. **Details** From £237-£348pp a night, with Expert Africa (expertafrica.com)

Best for activities

10 Tongole Wilderness Lodge Malawi

Tongole Wilderness Lodge in Nkhhotakota Wildlife Reserve is perfect for outdoor activities. Chipata mountain tempts keen walkers, the Bua River is ideal for fishing and canoeing, and you

can end the day sleeping in fly-camps under the stars. There is plenty of wildlife around but, with hilly terrain and sometimes skittish animals, it's not always easy to spot, although elephants frequently come down to the river to drink. Despite the emphasis on adventure, Tongole (tongole.com) doesn't compromise on style or luxury. The four riverside suites and family cottage are beautifully kitted out, with massive stone baths/plunge pools.
Details From £220pp a night with Real Africa (realafrica.co.uk)

Best for community

11 Asilia Naboisho Camp Kenya

Asilia Naboisho is a gorgeous camp in the heart of Naboisho Conservancy bordering the Maasai Mara. It has nine spacious tented suites, an elegant lounge and dining area and fabulous food. One of seven camps in 50,000 acres that make up Naboisho (naboisho.asiliaafrica.com), it's a shining

example of how tourism helps communities and conservation. Here, local people lease their land to camps and lodges, receive an income and in turn protect the wildlife to encourage more visitors. You only need to see the abundance of game and predators, including the big five, on these beautiful plains to realise that it works.

Details From £440pp a night with Safari Consultants (safari-consultants.com)

Best spa and safari

12 Karkloof Safari Spa South Africa

This safari spa (karkloofsafarispa.com) focuses as much on wellness as on wildlife. Its 3,500-hectare private estate near Pietermaritzburg, in KwaZulu-Natal's Midlands region, has 16 sumptuous villas scattered around the grounds and animals aplenty, including white rhinos. The boutique lodge also has 17 spa treatment rooms, a pool, a flotation room, hot tub, sauna and steam rooms.

Details From £560pp including unlimited spa treatments and safari drives with

Cox & Kings (coxandkings.co.uk)

Best for cycling safaris

13 Tafika Zambia

South Luangwa National Park is renowned for walking safaris. For more strenuous activity, though, try mountain biking at Tafika (remoteffrica.com) a charismatic camp that's been home to its owners John and Carole Coppinger for more than 20 years. Knowing the area intimately, John guides the cycling safaris on flat terrain along tracks and bush trails. Take a night drive, when leopards can often be seen hunting. Then relax in your rustic-chic en suite chalets made of reed and thatch and enjoy superb dining on the riverbank.

Details From £497pp, with Aardvark Safaris (aardvarksafaris.co.uk)

Best for desert

14 Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp Namibia

Accessible only by light aircraft, this camp is about as remote as you can get, in the Hoanib River Valley spanning the private Palmwag concession and the eerie Skeleton Coast National Park. With stark dunes, rugged mountains and gravel plains, it is also home to desert-adapted elephants, gemsbok, springbok and giraffe. The eight contemporary suites open out to terraces overlooking a waterhole, and despite its remoteness, the camp comes with fine dining and a pool (wilderness-safaris.com).

Details From £562pp a night including flights from Windhoek to Hoanib Skeleton Coast with Zambezi Safari & Travel Company (zambezi.co.uk)

Best for safari and sand

15 Sanctuary Saadani Safari Lodge Tanzania

Relax on the beautiful Indian Ocean after the rigours of long, early morning game drives on bumpy tracks. Sanctuary Saadani Safari Lodge (sanctuaryretreats.com) has 15 thatched tented suites on the beach. The different ecosystems allow for a range of activities, from game drives and walks to snorkelling, whale watching and dhow

cruises. Watch out for lions' paw prints in the sand.

Details From £185pp with Abercrombie & Kent (abercrombiekent.co.uk)

Best for gorillas

16 Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge Rwanda

Coming face to face with a mountain gorilla after an often arduous trek through the rainforest is the ultimate wildlife experience. Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge (governorscamp.com) has eight beautiful stone cottages on the hillside with open fires and fabulous mountain views. The main lodge has lounges, a library and verandas looking out to the volcanoes where the gorillas roam.

Details From £295-£460pp a night, with Cox & Kings (coxandkings.co.uk). Gorilla permits cost \$750 (£474)

Best for families

17 Londolozi Varty Camp South Africa

One of South Africa's oldest game reserves and family run for three generations, Londolozi's 16,000 hectares are part of the Sabi Sand conservation area. The family-friendly Londolozi Varty Camp (londolozi.com) has an inspiring cubs programme. For kids aged

6-16, activities include bead making, bug catching, "driving" a Land Rover, campouts, and even dung spitting.

Details From £463pp per adult (half price for children aged 6 to 11) with Cedarberg Africa (cedarberg-travel.com)

Best for elephants

18 Sanctuary Baines' Camp Botswana

Bordering the Moremi Game Reserve, Baines' Camp has five luxury suites overlooking the amber-coloured Boro River. What makes it truly special are three elephants called Jabulani, Morula and Thembi. Orphaned by culling, they

are now cared for by Doug and Sandi Grove on Sanctuary Retreat's private concession (sanctuaryretreats.com). The couple's charity Living with Elephants teaches local children to understand and live alongside their pachyderm neighbours. Guests can spend a morning with these charismatic beasts, walking with them trunk in hand.

Details From £500pp, with Rainbow Tours (rainbowtours.co.uk). The Walking with Elephants experience costs from £180pp and should be booked in advance

Best for birding

19 Kyambura Gorge Lodge Uganda

The Queen Elizabeth National Park is one of Africa's best birding areas, with more than 600 species, and the Kazinga Channel, a 40km waterway, is a spectacular avian haven. Boat trips launch from Mweya Jetty and, within seconds, you'll be spotting everything from pelicans to brilliantly plumaged malachite kingfishers and sometimes the elusive shoebill storks. Kyambura Gorge Lodge (volcanoessafaris.com), with views spanning the park and the gorge where chimps can be tracked, has six stylish *bandas*. Four of the big five can be found here — rhinos are absent.

Details From £435pp, with Natural World Safaris (naturalworldsafaris.com)

Best riding safari

20 Ant's Hill South Africa

You don't need any experience to enjoy the pleasures of seeing the Waterberg's game from the saddle — Ant's Hill has horses for all ages and abilities. There are no big cats to spook you, but you can get close to giraffe, zebra and see rhino and buffalo. The thatched lodge, set into a rocky outcrop with amazing vistas, is stylish, with wide four-posters, has great food, and is as child-friendly as they come.

Details From £195pp a night, with Bushbaby Travel (bushbaby.travel)

GRIFCO

TRAVEL PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Magazine



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Weekend



Budget tax break to save homeowners thousands

New £1 million threshold on inheritance charge

Francis Elliott Political Editor

David Cameron and George Osborne are to raise the inheritance tax threshold for couples who want to pass on their family home to their children to £1 million.

the housing market as elderly couples hang on to large family homes to pass them on tax free.

Others point out that the tax break is markedly less generous to single and divorced householders.

Defending the move to raise the



How to be a mother in 2015 Caitlin Moran

Magazine



Summer books The best beach reads

Weekend



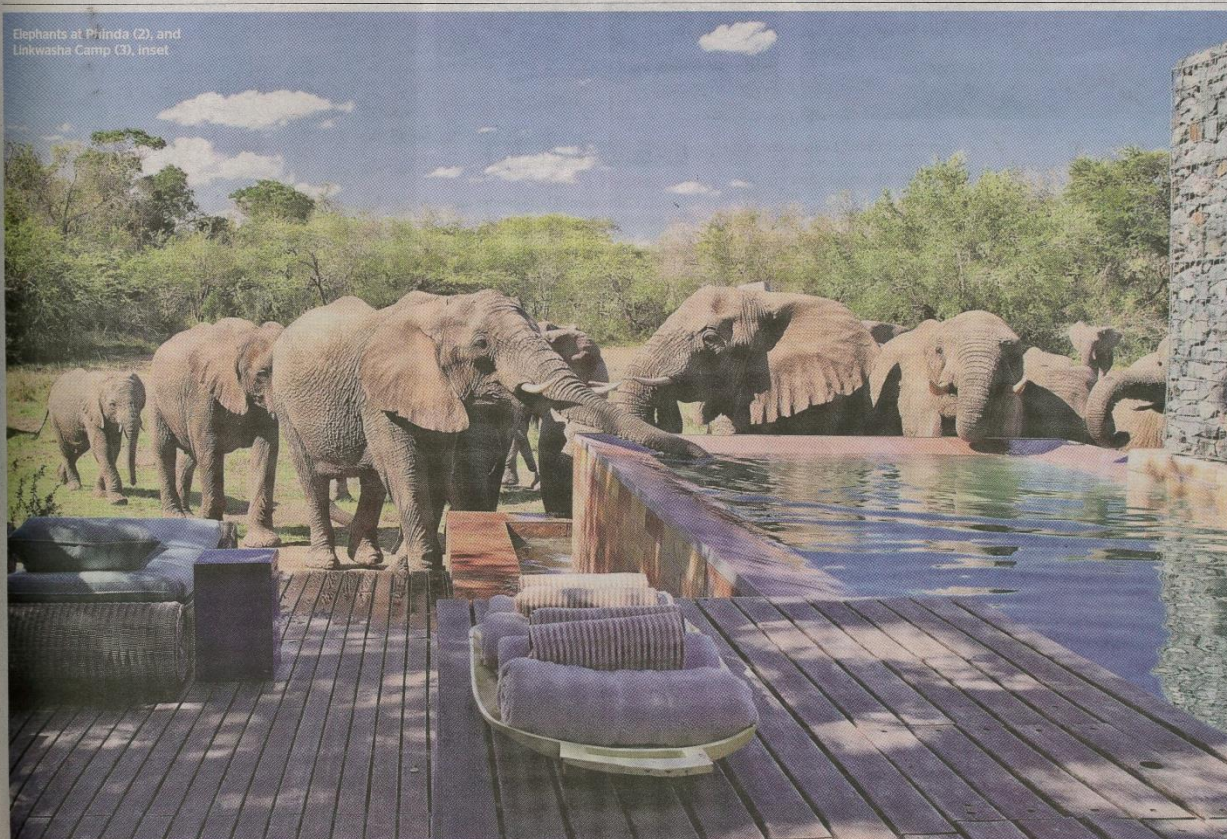
Travel



'This is the secret part of Tenerife, the one that hides behind Mount Teide'

Helen Ochryra on the other side of the Canaries

Elephants at Phinda (2), and Linkwasha Camp (3), inset



The 20 best safari camps

From a safari on the beach in Tanzania to a new tented camp in Zimbabwe, **Sue Watt** picks Africa's best places for game viewing

Prices are per person per night, based on double occupancy, and include food, drinks, taxes, park fees, guiding and game activities, unless otherwise stated. You can often get cheaper deals as part of a package.

Best on a budget

1 Flatdogs Zambia

Just outside the main gates of South Luangwa National Park, Flatdogs offers plenty of choice without costing a fortune. Accommodation ranges from comfortable safari tents to chalets and a

cool JackalBerry Tree House built around ebony trees. The restaurant is a la carte, with plenty of local produce, and the bar is lively and friendly. Just across the river from the park, it offers the chance to see plenty of wildlife — elephants roam through the camp and slurp from the swimming pool. Game drives, night drives and walking safaris are available with Flatdogs' guides and vehicles which can be paid for ad hoc or as part of a package.

Details Safari tents cost from \$42pp per night (£27) room only, chalets from \$62 (£40) room only (flatdogscamp.com)

Best for rhinos

2 Phinda Homestead South Africa

There is abundant game at Phinda in KwaZulu-Natal, but it is best known as the home of rhino conservation. In 2004, 16 black rhinos were released here and have thrived. Guests at Phinda Homestead (andbeyond.com) can track black rhinos on foot with expert rangers, and rhino capture-and-research safaris are available. Homestead is a stylish private four-bedroom villa — rent it for eight and it's less expensive than Phinda's Vlei Lodge. As well as your own butler and chef, you also get the services of a dedicated ranger and tracker, plus a safari vehicle.

Details From £364pp a night, with Steppes Travel (steppestravel.com)



Best new lodge

3 Linkwasha Zimbabwe

After years of economic turmoil, Zimbabwe is firmly back on the safari radar. The Victoria Falls International airport opens in September and high-end lodges are opening around the country. In Hwange National Park, Wilderness Safaris' (wilderness-safaris.com) luxurious Linkwasha Camp opened in May near the game-rich Ngamo Plains. It has eight vast tents with safari-chic decor overlooking a waterhole. There's

a swimming pool in which to cool off, indoor dining and a library. More than 30,000 elephants migrate to and from Botswana through Hwange, making it a prime destination for elephant-spotters. **Details** From £350-£560pp a night with Expert Africa (expertafrica.com)

GRIFCO
TRAVEL PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Circulation: 56,002

PR Value: £30,449

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Hotlist

SAFARI IN STYLE

Roar deals Zimbabwe not on your holiday hit list? It could be time to reconsider. In the Hwange National Park, lions and elephants are plentiful, and the fledgling safari industry here means you're likely to bag a much cheaper luxury base than in neighbouring nations. Linkwasha Camp opens in Hwange this month, with plush ensuite tents (for just 18 guests in total) and multiple decks for swimming or lazing, all overlooking the action around the watering hole. And when the new Victoria Falls airport opens later this summer, it'll be easier than ever to get there. Three-night stays from £1,189pp, all-inclusive, including transfers from Victoria Falls but not international flights (wilderness-safaris.com).



GRIFCO

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TRAVEL



One of a number of new camps seeking to entice travellers back to Zimbabwe, eight-hent Linkwasha Camp stands on the Linkwasha Concession in Hwange. Elephant, buffalo, impala and eland are regularly seen in the area

GRIFCO
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PR Value: £15,290

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HOUSE
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news

AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST

▼ DUBAI/BAHRAIN/OMAN

Four Seasons Hotel and Resorts has been busy in the Middle East with openings in Dubai and Bahrain. Each property has been designed for business and leisure travellers alike. In Oman, *Alila Jabal Akhdar* (left), set on a 2,000-metre high promontory, is the perfect base from which to explore the Al Hajar mountains.



▼ TANZANIA/ZANZIBAR

Mwiba Lodge in the Serengeti is a sophisticated retreat in 126,000 acres of private land with just eight tents perched on stilts. In the Selous Game Reserve, *Azara* (below) has opened a new camp, with 12 tented suites each with a private pool. Design combines classic safari style with the colours and patterns of Tanzania. Part housed in an eighteenth-century, traditional Zanzibari mansion and part in a connected newbuild, the new *Park Hyatt* will have an enviable location on the beach front of Zanzibar's Stone Town when it opens later this year.



► SOUTH AFRICA/MOZAMBIQUE

In Cape Town's Camps Bay, *The Marly* (below) has a stunning beachfront location. There are 11 suites – design is modern and mostly monochrome. Dine at *Umi*, a contemporary Japanese restaurant. Mozambique's Quirimbas archipelago has seen the arrival of *Anantara Medjumbe Island Resort & Spa*. Just one kilometre long and 300 metres wide, the island has 12 villas, dazzling coral and some of the best marine life in the world.



▼ BOTSWANA/NAMIBIA

Eagle Island Lodge, one of three *Belmond* properties in Botswana, has closed for a six-month refurbishment. The lodge, in the Okavango Delta, will reopen in July with a completely new look and feel. In Namibia the eight, dune-like tents of the new *Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp* (left), accessible by small plane only, are surrounded by the stunning hills of the Namib desert. The landscape may be harsh but the camp is the ultimate in desert chic.



▲ ISRAEL

Twenties grandeur meets contemporary flair at *The Norman* (above), in the Bauhaus district of Tel Aviv. Original Israeli artwork, overseen by a resident curator, is on display throughout the hotel. Nearby, the new *Brown TLV Urban Hotel* is aimed at a young and fashion-conscious crowd.



▲ KENYA

Tourism in Kenya has had a tricky time of late, nevertheless *Kichwa Tembo* (above) in the *Out of Africa* landscape of the northern Masai Mara has had a stylish makeover. The tented accommodation is beautifully appointed and it's a great place for kids. Not far from here, a new lodge called *Angama* – translated from Swahili as 'suspended in mid air' – will open in June on a dramatic escarpment overlooking the Mara reserve.



▲ ZIMBABWE

Opening in May, in the south-eastern corner of Hwange, *Linkwasha Camp* is a reinvention of the old camp of the same name. This one promises sleek, contemporary design with panoramic views and sleeps up to 18 guests. The highlight is the sleep-out deck for guests wishing to snooze beneath the stars.

► MOROCCO

Fez, the Marrakech of yesteryear, is upping its game. New to the scene is *Hotel Sahrai* in a hilltop position overlooking the city. It's small and super smart. Head to the rooftop bar for a magical sun-downer ☐



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Iran's
**'Generation
Normal'**

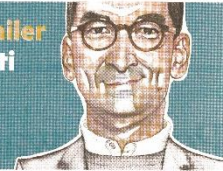
How young Iranians are forcing fast & dramatic change



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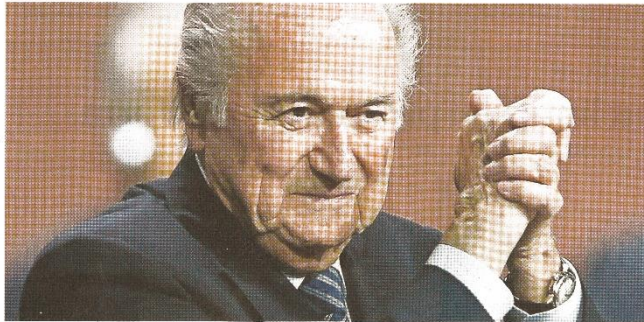
£3.00; Channel Islands £3.30; Republic of Ireland £3.50

SATURDAY 30 MAY / SUNDAY 31 MAY 2015

Blatter wins fifth term as Fifa president

Sepp Blatter has won a fifth term as president of Fifa at the end of a torrid week that saw a corruption scandal plunge football's governing body into its worst crisis in its history. Mr Blatter won 155 out of 206 votes at the Fifa congress in Zurich, Switzerland, far short of the required two-thirds majority. But his challenger, Prince Ali bin Al-Hussein, of Jordan, conceded. The vote came two days after US authorities indicted nine Fifa officials on corruption charges and Swiss prosecutors said that they were investigating a decision to award the 2018 and 2022 World Cups to Russia and Qatar.

Football in crisis page 6
Big Read page 9



Five-rib Sepp Blatter won another term as the head of football's governing body in a vote in Zurich, Switzerland — by STEVE GRANITZ

Briefing

US contraction highlights fragility

The US economy shrank an annualised 0.7 per cent in the first three months of this year, according to a second official estimate, in contrast to the 0.2 per cent growth the original estimate showed. — PAGE 7

Nemtsov aide said to have been poisoned

An activist and associate of murdered Russian politician Boris Nemtsov is in a critical condition with multiple organ failure after falling into a coma. Friends say he has been poisoned. — PAGE 6

Cup Final to test new 4G

Today's FA Cup final will be the subject for an experiment in which BT and the BBC will team up to put mobile viewers in control of camera angles with new 4G technology. — PAGE 4



Mortgage rate faith faces challenge

A rash of deals on offer to mortgage borrowers stems from a belief that interest rates will not be raised soon, but not much needs to change before the Bank of England rethinks its stance. — PAGE 3

Cameron returns after mixed receptions

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South Africa | Nelson Mandela's former retreat, built for him by one of the country's richest men on a game reserve in Limpopo province, is now available to rent. By Claire Wrathall

A great man's hideaway

When in February 1990 Nelson Mandela was finally freed after 27 years' incarceration, he traded his cell at Victor Verster Prison near Cape Town for the home of the Afrikaner insurance tycoon Douw Steyn, in the Johannesburg suburb of Sandhurst. The two had been introduced by members of the ANC. Mandela spent six months there, editing his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, and drafting South Africa's interim constitution.

Steyn, meanwhile, who is worth a reported £700m, having founded Auto & General in South Africa and BGL, one of the UK's largest consumer insurance groups, harboured dreams of owning a game reserve, and was beginning to buy up farms and land – a total of 10,000 hectares – within sight of the Waterberg mountains in Limpopo province, 200km or so north of Johannesburg. What had been grazing land and watermelon fields were gradually restored to bushveld.

Next he acquired the animals: rhinos, Cape buffalos, wildebeests, antelopes, zebras, giraffes, baboons and meerkats (Comparemarket.com, one of BGL's brands, shot its successful "Compare the meerkat" UK advertising campaign here). Some of them would end up as fodder for the predators that followed – lions, leopards, cheetahs, hyenas and jackals. Such game does not come



cheap: a giraffe can cost £18,000 (almost £1,000), which makes for an expensive dinner if the lions decide to take one out. Yet more than 40 kinds of mammal now thrive here.

Steyn also decided to dam the Frilkie se-loop river, a tributary of the Mogol, an undertaking that required permissions from the governments of Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, in order to create the largest man-made lake in southern Africa – 30 hectares – home to hippo and gigantic Nile crocodiles, which can be six metres long, weigh a tonne and live to 100.

Yet for all the ferociousness that resides here (a wild elephant, enraged by encroachment on its turf, once crushed three adult rhinos to death), Steyn called it Shambala – Sanskrit for paradise or place of peace – and built a cluster of beach-like thatched huts to stay and entertain in, very much in the tradition of Zulu "Qulwane" huts – except that they are air-conditioned, furnished with rustic French antiques and have lavish en-suite bathrooms.

In time Mandela, with whom Steyn had become friends (he'd stayed with Steyn again after he separated from his second wife, Winnie, in 1992), visited and admired what the businessman had created. As Mandela's assistant, Zekla la Grange, recalls in her memoir *Good Morning, Mr Mandela*, "Douw invited Maciba [Mandela's clan name] and Mrs Maciel [his third wife, Graça] to his farm Shambala in the Waterberg. It was

Main picture and above: the indoor pool and sitting room at Mandela House, on the Shambala game reserve. Below: Zulu Camp, a safari camp nearby on the reserve, and a bedroom in one of the camp's nine thatched chalets. Below right: Nelson Mandela



Steyn has a habit of turning his private residences into places to stay. First his Johannesburg home became the Saxon Hotel, one of the finest in Africa. Then in 2012, his Shambala retreat became Zulu Camp, a nine-chalet safari camp on the edge of a dammed river, the Sterkfontein, one of just four properties Steyn has built on the estate, the others being his own home, and the rather smaller one he built for Zekla la Grange.

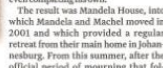
In contrast to the outwardly Zulu aesthetic of the camp, the simple wood-thatch-and-alfalfa construction of la Grange's Kudla Lodge and the quaint Palladian style of Steyn's own rather overblown mansion, Mandela's lounge conforms to a style one might call



a relaxed luncheon... When [they] returned they told me that Douw had offered to build a house on the farm for [their] use, where they could relax as no one would be able to disturb them there. [They] knew not to refuse the offer as Douw didn't take lightly to being refused. In no time he built the most beautiful house on the farm, before even completing his own."

The result was Mandela House, into which Mandela and Maciel moved in 2001 and which provided a regular retreat from their main home in Johannesburg. From this summer, after the official period of mourning that followed Mandela's death in 2013, during which the house was shut up, guests will be able to rent it for holidays.

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contemporary African. The classic zig-zag "iguana's elbow" motif has been woven into the thatched roof to symbolise good fortune. The chandelier in the main porch is made from spiralling kudu horns and porcupine quills. The carved teak frame of the front door was commissioned from the Mozambican master carver Matsemela the Nkomo. Traditional headwork decorates the Sterkfontein, one of just four properties Steyn has built on the estate, the others being his own home, and the rather smaller one he built for Zekla la Grange.

Untypically for a holiday rental (though not a presidential retreat), there are offices and a conference room, with a table designed to evoke a Xhosa

shield, a nod to Mandela's ethnicity. Thabo Mbeki and then Bill Clinton were, incidentally, the first to sign the guest book. But Mandela welcomed other celebrities, too. Optika came often; Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon dropped by while filming the South Africa-set rugby film *Inviictus*; and the housewarming event thrown for him by Steyn, whom la Grange likened to Jay Gatsby for the "over-the-top lavish parties" he likes to give, was attended by all 93 contestants from that year's *Miss World* Contest, direct from Sun City.

Also unusually there's a fully equipped medical suite, though it stands to be reconfigured as a spa. And the wide wheelchair-accessible corridors and grab rails in all the bathrooms are further reminders of Mandela's age – he was 85 when he moved in – as is the fact that the heated swimming pool is indoors rather than out.

Whatever resonance the former residents give the house, however, the chief appeal of a holiday here is always going to be the wildlife. Almost as soon as I'd lamplashed, curtains and counterpanes throughout the six-bedroom, two sitting-room house. And the loggia in which Mandela's collection of African paintings hung is faced with a colonnade of kuduwood pillars.

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Whatever resonance the former residents give the house, however, the chief appeal of a holiday here is always going to be the wildlife. Almost as soon as I'd lamplashed, curtains and counterpanes throughout the six-bedroom, two sitting-room house. And the loggia in which Mandela's collection of African paintings hung is faced with a colonnade of kuduwood pillars.

Untypically for a holiday rental (though not a presidential retreat), there are offices and a conference room, with a table designed to evoke a Xhosa

shield, a nod to Mandela's ethnicity. Thabo Mbeki and then Bill Clinton were, incidentally, the first to sign the guest book. But Mandela welcomed other celebrities, too. Optika came often; Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon dropped by while filming the South Africa-set rugby film *Inviictus*; and the housewarming event thrown for him by Steyn, whom la Grange likened to Jay Gatsby for the "over-the-top lavish parties" he likes to give, was attended by all 93 contestants from that year's *Miss World* Contest, direct from Sun City.

This summer's other big safari camp openings

Linkwasha, Zimbabwe Tourism to Zimbabwe continues to recover. Q2m arrivals are expected this year, and Wilderness Safaris has just opened Linkwasha, a camp on a private concession within Hwange National Park. Nine permanently sited khaki canvas tents, one large enough for a family of four, look out on a watering hole frequented by elephants, and you should spot wildebeests, zebras, lions, buffaloes, leopards and many other animals too. wildernesssafaris.com, from \$550 per person per night

Angama Mara, Kenya Set on the Olooloi Escarpment, 270km west of Nairobi on the edge of the Rift Valley,

Angama Mara opens this week. Overlooking the Maasai Mara, it's an idyllic place from which to watch the great wildebeest migration that takes place between July and October. By safari-lodge standards the style of its 15 "tented suites" is modern and modern, with polished parquet flooring, mid-century-style furniture and 10 metre-wide walls of glass, great for gazing at the panorama beyond. angama.com, from about \$990 pppn

Ebony Lodge, South Africa Also poised to reveal a new contemporary aesthetic is Ebony Lodge, the original base of upmarket safari operator Singita, where a complete overhaul will be unveiled on

July 8. Located on the banks of Sand river in Sabi Sands Game Reserve in South Africa's Kruger National Park, its lavishly specced 10 one-bedroom and two two-bedroom thatched suites (each with plunge pool) have shed their



Linkwasha camp, Zimbabwe

hitherto rather oppressive colonial style in favour of an altogether lighter look. singita.com, from about £940 pppn

Khaudum Lodge, Namibia July also sees the opening of four nine-room "luxury eco-lodges" in northeast Namibia's remote Khaudum National Park, home to herds of elephants, red hartebeests, kudus and giraffes. Operated by a new company, Namibia Exclusive Safaris, the camps are located in an arc that stretches from Brandstberg through Damaraland towards the border with Botswana. streppetravel.co.uk, from £480 pppn

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Contact my agent, Mark Bloham on 01661 871953
All items have provenance and certification.

Publication: FT Weekend
Date: 31st May 2015
Circulation: 212,489
PR Value: £313,968

This summer's other big safari camp openings

Linkwasha, Zimbabwe Tourism to Zimbabwe continues to recover (2.1m arrivals are expected this year), and Wilderness Safaris has just opened Linkwasha, a camp on a private concession within Hwange National Park. Nine permanently sited khaki canvas tents, one large enough for a family of four, look out on a watering hole frequented by elephants, and you should spot wildebeests, zebras, lions, buffaloes, leopards and many other animals too. wilderness-safaris.com, from \$550 per person per night

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CW



Publication: [FT How To Spend It Online](#)

Date: 13th May 2015

Circulation: 260,000

PR Value: £21,600

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Wilderness Safaris' Linkwasha Camp opens in Zimbabwe

Luxury tents and a pool overlook a busy watering hole in Hwange National Park




Image: Mike Myers

MAY 13 2015
SOPHY ROBERTS

As Zimbabwe prepares to open a new international airport at Victoria Falls this summer, the visa process has been made simpler with the recent launch of the Kaza Univisa, a single 30-day tourist visa (issued on arrival to citizens from 40 different countries) for Zambia and Zimbabwe (later in the year it will be rolled out to Angola, Botswana and Namibia). Also significant for Zimbabwe's upswing is the opening of the eight-bedroom Linkwasha Camp (www.wilderness-safaris.com; from \$550, all inclusive), its luxury tents and pool overlooking a lively watering hole in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe's largest single protected area. There is significance in the vote of confidence this gives to Zimbabwe: for Wilderness Safaris, a sizeable tourism company listed on the South African stock exchange, Linkwasha is its first foray back into the troubled country since 2000.

*More awe-inspiring wilderness adventures can be created with the new **mobile safari camps** setting up from Kenya's Northern Frontier to Ladakh's Nubra Valley, while on Kenya's Laikipian plateau, Enasoit safari camp is pioneering a new model for the wilderness experience.*

See also

Hwange National Park, Africa, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, Wilderness Safaris, Kaza Univisa, Safaris, Linkwasha Camp

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PR Value: £248,649

How To Spend It
Stunning dresses
in aqua blues

MAGAZINE



FT WEEKEND MAGAZINE

China's great migration: one family's story

FT Weekend

FT Money Should you raid your final-salary pension? | Travel Lucy Kellaway joins an action-packed cruise ship

00. Channel Islands £3.50; Republic of Ireland €3.50

SATURDAY 2 MAY / SUNDAY 3 MAY 2015

sterling suffers sell-off as tight campaign climax strains nerves

Narrow Tory lead in poll of polls • Miliband bookies' favourite for PM • Markets volatile

BY JOEL LEWIN
AND ARRIET AGNEW

ing dropped sharply against the
yesterday for the second consecu-
tively, falling 1.3 per cent following a
performance in April, as markets
for a potentially messy outcome
week's election.
ough Conservative campaign
believe David Cameron is finally
to pull ahead in a very tight con-
e opinion polls are pointing to a
parliament. "Finally we are seeing



deal" with the SNP, but a minority
Labour government would almost cer-
tainly need the support of Nicola Stur-
gen's party on an issue-by-issue basis.
Market measures of sterling volatility
against the euro and the dollar – key
gauges of investor fear – rose in April,
reaching levels not seen since 2011, and
have since remained high.
Since March, investors have pulled
out almost half a billion pounds from
UK equity exchange-traded funds, as
electoral uncertainty contrasts with
bullish sentiment in European markets.

Briefing

► **US fears over UK foreign policy prospects**
The US fears any UK election result will further
London's foreign policy detachment, with neither
main party pledging more engagement and the
Tories wedded to a vote on EU membership. — PAGE 5

► **Exporters struggle amid factory woes**
Companies reported a decline in new orders from
abroad reflecting the struggle to boost exports to
the eurozone as growth in factory activity slowed in
April, according to purchasing managers. — PAGE 4

► **Banned film sees the light in Iran**
The Tehran screening of a banned
Abbas Kiarostami film, starring
Juliette Binoche, right, has
highlighted the increasing vibrancy
of Iran's cultural scene. — PAGE 6



► **Nepal's child-goddess unscathed**
The home of Kathmandu's Kumari, the city's living
child-goddess and the nation's protector, remained
unscathed in last Saturday's earthquake with locals
attributing her survival to her "powers". — PAGE 3

GRIFCO

TRAVEL PUBLIC RELATIONS

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MAY 2 2015

FINANCIAL TIMES

how to spend it

22-PAGE
BEAUTY SP

RISING TO THE OCCAS

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travelista

Wander woman **Sophy Roberts** fast-tracks international intelligence on where to be and what to see

→ Roald Amundsen sledged to the **SOUTH POLE**, reaching it on December 14, 1911, five weeks ahead of Captain Robert Scott. In December this year, you can retrace the Norwegian's steps using neither dogs (Amundsen's preference) nor horses (one of Scott's mistakes) but three fully customised Toyota Hiluxes.

The vehicles (two clients per truck) drive the route in convoy from the Ross Ice Shelf, going up and over the Transantarctic Mountains, before crossing the inland plateau to arrive at the South Pole. Supporting the team are a guide/driver with extensive medical and mechanical skills and full logistical back-up to allow for camping on the ice at -30°. The departure on November 29 is one of four eight- to 10-day, 1,000km-long trips (running back to back) that start or finish at **Union Glacier Camp** (www.adventure-network.com) in Antarctica's remote southern Ellsworth Mountains. The trip can be booked through **The Explorations Company** (www.explorationscompany.com), with prices from £110,000 per person for 10 days, including flights in and out of Punta Arenas in Chile.



Above: one of the Toyota Hilux trucks used in The Explorations Company's Antarctic expeditions

→ Trekking in the **RUSSIAN FAR EAST** in search of the rare Amur or Siberian tiger is an adventure being pioneered by Will Bolsover, founder of **Natural World Safaris** (www.naturalworldsafaris.com).

While a sighting is by no means a given (there are only about 400 of these creatures left in the wild), there is still much to lure committed naturalists, including the chance to set up camera traps. You travel by Ski-Doo into the **Durminskoye Forest Reserve** (www.russiatigertracking.com), a three-hour drive from Khabarovsk, and stay in a lodge run by the reserve's director, Alexander Batalov. Bolsover glitizes up the trip, which otherwise relies on simple accommodation, with the return Moscow-Khabarovsk transfer on the Trans-Siberian Railway. A bespoke 10-night Siberian-tiger expedition, including flights from London, starts at £2,850 per person based on two sharing. One of the regions where Bolsover is at his best is **MADAGASCAR**, where he hosts a leg of his \$1m **Journey to Nature's Edge**, designed around 18 critically endangered species all over the world (10 per cent of each trip's cost is donated to Cites – the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna). In this wonderland of curious creatures, Bolsover focuses on the rare black and white ruffed lemur; in the **HIMALAYAS**, he spotlights snow leopards.

→ Outfitter **Scott Dunn** (www.scottdunn.com), meanwhile, is going for easier gains in these



Above: trekking in the Himalayas, part of Scott Dunn's Ultimate Nepal by Helicopter. Below: a ruffed lemur at Andasibe-Mantadia National Park, eastern Madagascar



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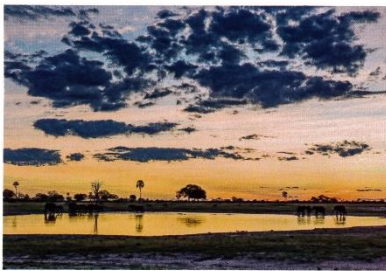
Above: a sitting room at Kinsterina Hotel, Monemvasia, Greece. Below: Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe

com) with views onto the Annapurna range. The 10-night Scott Dunn trips cost from £10,540 per person based on two sharing, with return flights from London.

→ As **ZIMBABWE** prepares to open a new international airport at Victoria Falls this summer, the visa process has been made simpler with the recent launch of the Kaza Univisa, a single 30-day tourist visa (issued on arrival to citizens from 40 different countries) for Zambia and Zimbabwe (later in the year it will be rolled out to Angola, Botswana and Namibia). Also significant for Zimbabwe's upswing is the opening of the eight-bedroom **Linkwasha Camp** (www.wilderness-safaris.com; from \$550, all inclusive), its luxury tents and pool overlooking a lively watering hole in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe's largest single protected area. There is significance in the vote of confidence this gives to Zimbabwe: for Wilderness Safaris, a sizeable tourism company listed on the South African stock exchange, Linkwasha is its first foray back into the troubled country since 2000.

→ **GREECE** too has pockets of wildness, including in the southern Peloponnese. Among the most elegant places to stay is **Kinsterina** (www.kinsterinahotel.gr; from €120), a 13th-century mansion located outside the medieval-castle town of Monemvasia, a three-and-a-half-hour drive from Athens. Now the 27-suite hotel, soulfully decorated by the family that owns it, has a new run of rooms to compete with its original vaulted Byzantine ones: 11 residences (10 one-bedroom, one two-bedroom) and two two-bedroom villas dotted about the 18 acres of vineyards, olive, lemon and orange groves.

→ In **VENICE**, the big news is the reopening of **San Clemente Palace** (www.stregisvenice.com; from €550) under the St Regis brand. This one-time monastery, military outpost and guest home for Venetian nobility – roles played at different times from the 12th to the 17th centuries – has undergone a year of renovations, including the restoration of an 11th-century church consecrated for weddings. Located on a private island in the heart of the lagoon, the newly designed rooms aren't without the requisite brocade, velvet, damask, Murano glass and Burano lace; it's just a great deal fresher, with contemporary, clean-lined furniture and modern artwork making for a welcome glimmer of investment in a city too oft described as sinking. +



Above: San Clemente Palace, Venice

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES; SCOTT DUNN/SUPREMACY PHOTOGRAPHY

ZIMBABWE'S SLEEK SAFARI SPOTS

After years in the tourism wilderness, this country is back in the frame

Words by PETER BROWNE



As Rhodesia in the 1960s and 70s, this landlocked Southern African country was boycotted thanks to its bombastic white rulers. After independence in 1980, however, it swiftly became a tourist honeypot, hailed for its beauty and exceptional safari guides, considered to be the best and bravest in all of Africa.

Everything changed around the millennium when President Mugabe unleashed his henchmen, followed by complete economic collapse. But with the US dollar providing some stability after being adopted as currency, there's a feeling things are moving in the right direction.

This month, Wilderness Safaris opens Linkwasha, the sleekest safari camp seen in a generation, in a private concession in Hwange National Park, and by summer the rickety airport at Victoria Falls will emerge from a huge, Chinese-backed overhaul as a potentially powerful regional hub.

In the capital, Harare, smart little guest houses such as [Wayell House Private Guest Lodge](#) are once again doing respectable business and spectacular Gonarezhou National Park, down in the south on the Mozambique border, looks like it's back on track with the recent addition of [Chilo Gorge Safari Lodge](#) and a fresh litter of family-run bush camps.

Wilderness Safaris' Linkwasha Camp: www.wilderness-safaris.com. Doubles from £640



COVERAGE REPORT – MAY 2015

COVERAGE SUMMARY

<u>DATE</u>	<u>PUBLICATION</u>	<u>LANGUAGE</u>	<u>CIRCULATION</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>
MEDIA				
May 2015	Laha	Arabic	147,755	Weekly
May 2015	Al Shabiba	English	38,164	Daily
May 2015	The National	English	65,000	Daily
May 2015	Robb Report Arabia	Arabic	10,000	Monthly
May 2015	Financial Times Supplement	English	140,073	Daily
May 2015	Hotel and Rest.com	English	9,174 UVM	Online
May 2015	TheNational.ae	English	1,366,671 UVM	Online
May 2015	DotwNews.com	English	108,455 UVM	Online

UMV* - Unique Monthly Visitors

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Market Pan Arab
Language Arabic
Section Supplement

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Size 0.36 Pages
AVE \$2741.78 | \$7616.05/Page

April 29, 2015

جزر فيجي شهد عسلها حلّى إجازة جنيفر لوبيز وعريسها مارك أنطوني

تعتبر مقصد نجوم هوليوود والمصورين الذين تحار عدساتهم في رصد الجمال. وقد أمضت الممثلة والمغنية جنيفر لوبيز وعريسها السابق مارك أنطوني شهر عسلهما في فيجي. فهنا الطبيعة تنقض مفهوم الأبعاد الثلاثة، ليبدو التقاط صورة محاولة قاصرة للتقاط المشهد الذي يتبدل مع تبدل الليل والنهار وما بينهما. يتقل زوار الجزيرة بين جزرها العشرين ليجدوا أنفسهم بين نسائم تجعلهم يشعرون برذاً، وشواطئ رملية تغمرها شمس ذهبية، ترقص على طولها أشجار جوز الهند، وهي تراقب هواة ركوب الأمواج يتمايلون على ألواحهم متحدئين ارتفاع الموج. وعند المساء تتحول جزر فيجي وتحديداً جزيرة مامانوكا إلى مهرجان من الضحك حيث تتبعث من الملامهي الليلية الموسيقى على أنواعها. وكان زوار هذه الجزيرة يريدون أن يستغلوا كل دقيقة يعضونها فيها. ولعل سباق الكركند من أطرف النشاطات الموجودة في الجزيرة. أفضل وقت للسفر إلى فيجي بين شهري أيار/ مايو وأيلول/سبتمبر.

الجزيرة الشمالية في سيشيل هنا كان شهر عسل الأمير وليام وكايت ميدلتون وجورج كلوني وأمل الدين

لا يمكن إسقاط جزر سيشيل من برنامج شهر العسل، حتى المشاهير لا يمكنهم استبعادها وإن زاروها أكثر من مرة. فجمال هذه الجزر بما تحضنه من سحر طبيعي برمائي، يجعل تفضية الإجازة فيها واحدة استرخاء تنسيك كل ما له علاقة بالعالم خارج حدود هذه الجزر. فلا عجب في أن يختار جورج كلوني وعروسه أمل علم الدين تفضية شهر عسلهما في إحدى جزرها، الجزيرة الشمالية التي سبقهما إليها الثاني الملكي الأمير وليام وكايت ميدلتون في أيار/مايو عام ٢٠١١ حيث أمضيا شهر عسلهما فيها أيضاً. تقع الجزيرة الشمالية وسط جزر السيشيل السابعة في المحيط الهندي، وهي جزيرة أقرب إلى منتجج خاص تضم إحدى عشرة فيلا خاصة، ولكل فيلا شاطئها الخاص. هنا في هذه الجزيرة الترف الإنساني يتماهى مع الترف الطبيعي، تخيلي جلسة تدليك على شرفة مفتوحة لا تسمعين سوى هدير الأمواج ورفقة العاصفير، وتداعيك النسائم الآتية من المحيط فتتخذ الحواس لحوالي ٩٠ دقيقة وسط فردوس أرضي منفلت من عبثة العالم الحديث.

وإذا كنت وعريسك من هواة الغطس، ففي جوف البحر فردوس مائي يفوق جماله الفردوس الأرضي. وتتأولان عشاءكما على الشاطئ وتتلاذدان بأطباق ثمار البحر من خيرات المحيط الهندي.



May 28, 2015

3 التي بيبة

بلادنا

تابع أهم الأحداث فور حدوثها عبر تويتر @localshabiba

مجلس المناقصات يسند مشاريع بأكثر من 13 مليون ريال

اعتماد فتح المظاريف المالية لمشروع إنشاء البنية الأساسية للمنطقة السكنية الجديدة في لوى



«الإسكان» تسند مشاريع جديدة بأكثر من (497) ألف ريال

بمقتضى قرار صادر عن مجلس المناقصات... الإسكان تسند مشاريع جديدة بأكثر من (497) ألف ريال

البنية الأساسية للمنطقة السكنية الجديدة... مجلس المناقصات يسند مشاريع بأكثر من 13 مليون ريال



البنية الأساسية للمنطقة السكنية الجديدة... مجلس المناقصات يسند مشاريع بأكثر من 13 مليون ريال

Advertisement for various electronics including LG washing machines, Dell laptops, and smartphones like the iPhone 5s.

Large advertisement for household products like Tide detergent, Dove soap, and AFIA cleaning agents.

Advertisement for fresh produce including strawberries, mushrooms, and other vegetables.

Advertisement for 'Lulu' (لولو) supermarket, featuring a collection of products and a 'Buy 1, Get 1' offer.

مقنطحات في الاول من الشهر المقبل... وفد من «الدولة» يزور «الشيخ الفرنسي»

وفد عسكري مصري يزور مجلس الدولة... وفد من «الدولة» يزور «الشيخ الفرنسي»

الرئيسي يغادر البلاد متوجها إلى دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة... الرئيس يغادر البلاد متوجها إلى دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

السعودي يلتقي قضاة الجمعية العمومية بالظاهرة... السعودي يلتقي قضاة الجمعية العمومية بالظاهرة

السلطة تشارك في اجتماعات رابطة الدول المطلة على الهندي... السلطة تشارك في اجتماعات رابطة الدول المطلة على الهندي

مستطع الصليحية: يشارك السلطنة اليوم في فعاليات اجتماعات... مستطع الصليحية: يشارك السلطنة اليوم في فعاليات اجتماعات

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May 28, 2015

10 Thursday, May 28, 2015 www.thenational.ae

the life

TheNational business

entrepreneurs



Gevin Munro grows trees into the form of usable furniture through years of pruning, coppicing and grafting. Oil Scuff/ APF

Furniture branches out

Trees coaxed and pruned into shape to function as unusual living room fixtures

Deep in the English countryside, there's a bizarre sight: rows of trees being grown into upside-down chairs, slowly taking shape over years of careful nurturing.

About 150 armchairs, 100 lampshades and other items including mirror frames are being grown out of the ground in a highly unusual adventure in furniture design.

The branch of Gevin Munro, his Full Crown company has produced some early prototypes, with each item one solid, jointless piece of wood.

"It's a bit like a vineyard. You've got a few years to get everything up and growing," he says.

And it is not simply a case of planting the trees and leaving them to it. There's plenty of tending and take between Mr Munro and his plantation.

"They don't grow into chairs on their own. At the same time, you can't force them to do anything they don't want to do otherwise they die back," he says.

The one-hectare plot of rented farmland is situated in the rolling grassy fields outside the mar-

ket town of Wirksworth in rural Derbyshire, central England.

On a farm also containing a microbrewery, a smokery, flower cultivation and plenty of sheep, the rows of trees are growing around blue corrugated plastic frames.

Mr Munro, 40, nurtures and coaxes them into shape through years of pruning, coppicing and grafting. Willow can take four to five years to grow into a chair, whereas oak can take up to nine years.

The designer also works with ash, hazel, crabapple and sycamore.

"A lot of the stuff we do is Stone Age. Since we were cavemen, we were cutting trees down at various heights," he says.

"It's an extension of the natural rhythm. Everything we do is based on what happens anyway and making the subtlest twist to that. Early on I was torturing them and ultimately it doesn't work."

Early experiments with chemical weedkiller caused more harm than good, so organic methods are used.

Powdery mildew is kept down with milk, while caterpillars are picked off. The daily duties involve groundkeeping and going round the furniture with secateurs.

"At any given point, there's a branch that's in the right moment to do something and you've got to find it," says Mr Munro.

"For every 100 pieces, there are 1,000 shoots and branches that you want, and 10,000 that you don't. It's not necessarily obvious which one is which."

Early experiences got Mr Munro's mind racing about what he could do with trees.

His mother had an overgrown bonsai which looked like a throne, while a bad back as a youngster meant his spine was broken and reset in hospital.

"That got me thinking about grafting and how things stick together."

He graduated in furniture design in Leeds, northern England, and ended up making items from driftwood in California.

"I was stitching together bigger lumps and I had a 'Eureka' moment: if we grow the things we want directly into the shape, there's no waste," he says.

"In 2005 I came back to the UK and got the chance to plant



home front
Mario Volpi
Can landlord keep deposit for repairs?

Q I have a small issue with our commercial landlord. We rent a small apartment for our crew in International City, England cluster, and have recently moved out after 12 months occupancy. We repainted the flat, fixed cupboard doors and gave the place a good clean so that there was no excuse from the landlord not to return the Dh3,000 deposit. The apartment was returned in a better condition than when handed over to us. He has come back saying that there are a few things that need to be fixed and he will keep the deposit unless repaired at our own expense. These are the circuit breaker requires replacement on the main fuse box; two light fixtures are not working; one light switch is broken; one wall plug socket is not working; shower attachment is broken and held up with tape. I know from my experience as a landlord in the UK and also from my own private rental here that all the above would be the responsibility of the landlord. Surely we cannot be expected to maintain the fundamental services in the apartment, can we? The contract mentions a Dh500 threshold but looks a little ambiguous as this could be per item. MA, Dubai

A The subject of the security deposit comes up time and time again from many of my readers. Firstly, in general terms and landlords must really spell out the responsibilities of both landlord and tenant when it comes to the maintenance within the rental contract. It is generally divided out along the lines of major and minor maintenance, minor being under Dh500 and major above Dh500 - for the total work. Moving back to your question, the items you mention that the landlord is requesting get fixed, I assume were in working order when you were living in the property, so my question would be that if they stopped working, assuming you would have informed the owner at the time. If during the course of your tenancy these items did work but now do not, then it is not unreasonable for a landlord to request you give back the property to him in the same condition and repair as it was handed to you. There is

another thing to consider but this opens up another can of worms and this is "fair wear and tear". The interpretation of this phrase can mean different things to different people, but what I suggest to both you and the landlord is to come to some sort of a compromise that would enable both of you to come out of this feeling satisfied.

I found an apartment in Dubai which I liked and I agreed on the terms of the lease with the agent. The agent asked for a 5 per cent deposit of Dh4,000, which I paid. However, my circumstances changed and I wasn't able to go through with the lease. Is the agent allowed to retain the deposit? He claims it is non-refundable. EM, Dubai

There are a few things to consider here. Firstly did you actually sign the tenancy contract? If so, then it could be harder for you to get the deposit back. The other point to say is when you handed over the deposit, what was written on the receipt? Did it say refundable or non-refundable? The deposit given when renting a property effectively acts as two payments. It is handed over at the beginning to reserve the property, to hold and book it for you until the contract is signed. The same deposit is then used after the agreement has been signed in case there are any breakages or issues that are directly responsible by the tenant during the term of the tenancy. I suggest trying, where possible, to negotiate directly with the landlord (unless of course the agent has authority to discuss matters on behalf of him). See if there is any middle ground that can be reached between you, because going to the rental committee may not be cost-effective.

Mario Volpi is the managing director of Ocean View Real Estate and has worked in the industry in the emirate and in London for the past 20 years. Send any questions to mario@oceanviewdubai.com

The advice provided in our columns does not constitute legal advice and is provided for information only.

► business@thenational.ae

big ticket

Seychelles with a royal pedigree

Gillian Duncan

Few holiday locations are as exclusive as the private resort North Island in the Seychelles.

Not only does it regularly attract celebrities such as Jennifer Aniston, but also British royalty - the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge honeymooned there in 2011.

And now you can visit, too, as part of an "ultimate city and beach combination package" offered by a luxury travel company in Dubai, which includes one week on North Island and one week in a penthouse in Cape Town, South Africa.

But it also comes with a hefty price tag, at Dh615,325 per couple for the two-week break.

The Cape Town apartment, which holds the record for the most expensive piece of residential real estate ever sold in Africa, offers views of both the Table Mountain National Park and Robben Island.

"It is the best location in Cape Town," says Matt Vlemmiks, director of the Middle East region at Lightfoot, a travel company that targets ultra-wealthy travellers, which is selling the break.

"The lady who owns it is a collector of fine art and antiques as well, so whenever you stay in



The Seychelles' North Island is paired with Cape Town as part of the "ultimate city and beach combination package". Courtesy Lightfoot

one of its properties you are surrounded by a private art collection."

Meanwhile, North Island is owned by a company which runs luxury safaris in Africa. It has just 11 guest villas on the small granite island and was named the third-best hotel in the world in the Condé Nast Traveller Reader Awards last year.

The stay at North Island is fully inclusive, and even covers private helicopter transfers from the main island in the Seychelles, Mahé.

The bad news is that the two-week holiday price tag does not include flights, so expect to part

Top five popular destinations for UAE Lightfoot customers

- 1 Sri Lanka
 - 2 Maldives
 - 3 South Africa
 - 4 Italy
 - 5 Vietnam
- Source: Lightfoot

q&a travel desires fulfilled

Matt Vlemmiks, director of the Middle East region, reveals the more extravagant bookings Lightfoot has received.

The company also has offices in Singapore and Hong Kong. Why did it choose those locations?

The founder is a man who likes to travel, but he just spotted that there was a gap in the market in those areas for that type of company. He saw that even though there is a lot of domestic and expat money in each of the areas we have set up, those companies didn't really tend to exist.

Do you receive many ultra-expensive bookings in the UAE? Absolutely. We booked a big holiday to the States last year for a lady and her extended family. She was interested in the celebrity side of LA, Disneyland and Universal Studios and

private access to those areas. Then she wanted to travel up the coast, and to Santa Barbara, Laguna Beach and San Francisco as well. Our job was to get exclusive experiences for them, so the private guide at Disney, the private access to William Randolph Hearst's estate; the chance to drive a supercar up the coast, things like that. That cost roughly, including flights, about \$200,000 for two weeks, but she flew first class as well.

How do you come up with the ideas for the experiences? Partly it is through extensive travel among our destination teams, who are often lucky enough to sample some truly magical experiences, accommodation and places. We also ensure we use the best possible local partners in each destination, whether it be excursion and transfer providers, or the hotels themselves.

Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer
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رحلة سفاري شاملة

مخيم جديد بالقرب من ساحل سكيلتون يضع إطارا
لتجربة سفاري فريدة من نوعها.

بروس والين Bruce Wallin

يفحص ركامًا من الصخور، ثم يهدق باحثًا بعينه الزرقاوين، ويضيف: «هذه واحدة». يمد يده برفق لالتقاط كسرة صقيلة من الفخار الأحمر، لا يزيد عرضها على بوصتين ربما، ويقلبها ليظهر جانبًا مغطيًا باللون الأسود. ثم يجد في بضع ثوان عدة قطع أخرى، منها واحدة أكبر حجمًا لها مقبض، ليكشف فجأة أن هذه البقعة التاتية وسط بحر الرمل والصخر تضم كنزًا ثمينًا من الآثار القديمة. يقول العالم صاحب اللحية الكثة التي اصطفت بلون كلبان الصحراء الشهيرة، وهو يعيد الكسرة الأصلية إلى الأرض حسب الوضع الذي وجدها عليه تمامًا: «البقايا منتشرة في كل مكان، لكن يجب النظر بعناية وعن قرب».

د. هيليب ستاندر ضيوفه، متشوقًا يسبق لمقاسمتهم اكتشافًا جديدًا له في أراضي مخيم هوانيب ساحل سكيلتون في ناميبيا. يتمتع الباحث المختص بالملكة الحيوانية من جامعة كامبريدج، الذي يدرس الأسود الغامضة التي تستوطن صحراء ناميب منذ أكثر من 15 عامًا، بموهبة الكشف عن الكنوز المخبأة في المنطقة، لكن مصدر الإثارة التي يشعر بها حاليًا لا يأتي من الأسود ولا من أي كائن حي آخر، بل من آثار شعب ياند من الرحل الذين تجولوا في هذا الامتداد القاحل من شمال غرب ناميبيا قبل آلاف السنين. «إذا نظرت إلى الأرض حولك ستجد قطعًا مكسرة من الفخار»، كما يقول ستاندر وهو



رحلات



على مساحة أربعة ملايين فدان، ويقال إنها واحدة من الحدائق الوطنية التي تستقبل أقل عدد من الزوار في أفريقيا كلها. في أغسطس الماضي، أصبح الوصول إلى المنطقة المعزولة متاحًا نسبيًا، لكن ليس سهلاً على الإطلاق. جراء افتتاح فندق مترف للإقامة في ناميبيا، وهو مخيم فخم يمكن الوصول إليه بالطائرة، ويوفر تجربة سفاري فريدة ومناسبة.

يقع مخيم هوانيب ساحل سكيلتون ضمن أراضي Palmwag Concession الممتدة على مساحة 1.1 مليون فدان. على الحدود الشمالية الشرقية مع حديقة الوطنية، ولا يمكن الوصول إليه إلا بالطائرات الخفيفة. يضم ثمانية مبانٍ وهو واحد من 11 مخيمًا تديرها في ناميبيا شركة Wilderness Safaris التي تتخذ من جنوب أفريقيا مقرًا لها. ساعدت مخيمات الإقامة التي افتتحتها الشركة بالقرب من كتيان ناميب-نوكولوفت، وفي شمال غرب الأراضي التابعة لشعب هيمبا، وفي غيرها من المناطق النائية على ترسيخ صناعة سياحة السفاري المترفة في ناميبيا.

في هوانيب، تحيط مباني الإقامة الثمانية بالكوخ الرئيس، وشيدت كلها تحت سقف من القماش السميك المتين والمشدود فوق أشكال فنية تشابه الأعمدة. أما التصميم الداخلي الحديث المتميز بالبساطة فيبرز أعمالاً فنية اختيرت بموافقة مصور الحياة البرية المعروف، غراهام سبرينغر، إذ تركز نسخ الصور المنتقلة بالأسود والأبيض، مها وحشية

«لا تعد ناميبيا الوجهة المقصودة أول مرة. لكنها تلائم بالتأكيد أولئك الذين اختاروا مشاهدة الحياة البرية في مكان آخر، ويبحثون عن شيء مختلف، من أجل دفع الحدود خطوة أبعد قليلاً». كما يقول ويل جونز، مؤسس شركة السفاري Journeys by Design ومديرها، التي تتخذ من بريطانيا مقرًا لها.

يضع جونز، الذي نشأ في ستة بلدان أفريقية، ناميبيا في قائمة الوجهات الأصيلة التي تترك انطباعات عميقة لا تنسى، وهي مجموعة تضم أيضًا زامبيا ورواندا وغيرها من المواقع الأقل شهرة. يقول إن ناميبيا بالذات تعرض «تجربة سفاري أكثر تخصصًا وأقل قيودًا. حيث يمكن للزائر أن يعمق وقتًا أطول في عدد أقل من الأماكن، ويتعمق في عالم الحياة البرية المفصل: الحشرات، والزواحف، لكنه يستطلع أيضًا مشاهدة الأسود والفيلة، وأسلوب تكيفها مع الحياة في الصحراء. ذلك كله موجود في ناميبيا، لكن من الأصعب قليلاً العثور عليه».

بينما ظلت ناميبيا تقليدياً تلبى احتياجات سوق رحلات السفاري التي يقودها الرحالة بأنفسهم، يجد جونز أن مستوى الإقامة والضيافة في البلد قد شهد تحسناً دراماتيكيًا على مدى سنوات العقد الماضي. مع ذلك «فإن السلعة المترفة الرئيسة التي توفرها ناميبيا هي المدى الواسع، تلك القدرة على الشعور بأنك متحرر كليًا من إسار القيود ومنقطع عن العالم، ذلك الإحساس بالعزلة في القفار، مثلما يقول.

يتبدى ذلك الإحساس بأوضح صورة في حديقة ساحل سكيلتون الوطنية، التي تمتد

في ناميبيا، بلد الغموض والسحر والحدود القصوى. تبدو نصيحة الدكتور فيليب سديدة ومفيدة، فهي تقع إلى الشمال من جنوب أفريقيا، وإلى الغرب من بوتسوانا على الطرف الجنوبي الغربي من القارة الأفريقية. معظم أراضيها من الصحاري القاحلة والشواطئ الرمادية المقفرة على المحيط الأطلسي. تبلغ مساحة ناميبيا ضعف مساحة كاليفورنيا، لكن لا يزيد عدد السكان على 2.3 مليون نسمة، أي نحو 6 في المئة من سكان الولاية الأمريكية. يمثل هؤلاء 11 عرقًا مختلفًا على أقل تقدير، منها شعب سان الذي يسكن صحراء كالاهاري. وشعب هيمبا شبه البدوي في المنطقة الشمالية الغربية المعزولة، والمتحدرون من المستعمرين الأوروبيين الألمان والإنجليز، والناطقون باللغة الأفريكانية.

نصف أراضي ناميبيا تقريبًا من المحميات الخاصة والحدائق والمنتزهات، مثل حديقة ناميب-نوكولوفت الوطنية، حيث تمتد أعلى كتيان الرمال اللاهية في العالم على طول 60 ميلًا قبل أن ترتطم بالمحيط الأطلسي البارد. تؤوي هذه الحدائق الوطنية حيوانات أفريقيا المعروفة باسم «الخمس الكبار» (الأسد والنمر والجاموس والفيل ووحيد القرن)، فضلًا عن الثدييات النادرة مثل الضباع البنية التي تستوطن الساحل، وأكثر من 600 نوع من الطيور، وقمعة القراء، والحيتان الحدباء، وغيرها من الأحياء المائية. مع ذلك، وكما يشير دون تردد كثير من الزوار الذين يسافرون إلى ناميبيا بانتظام، يجب ألا نتوقع في ناميبيا رحلة سفاري مشابهة للرحلات في سيرينغيتي المتميزة بوفرة الحياة البرية.

◆
ينعش مجرى نهر
هوانيب ويوفر التما
للغنية والزراف
وغيرها من أنواع
الحياة البرية التي
تكيفت مع الصحراء.
على الرغم من أن
المعدل السنوي لهطول
الأمطار يقل عن بوصة
واحدة.
◆

عرين أسد أفريقي وأثارة، ثم تحول إلى درب منحدر إلى مجرى النهر مهدته أقدام الفيلة، حيث كانت سيارة سفاري بالانتظار. بعد رحلة قصيرة ظهرت الحيوانات التي مهدت الطريق، وكانت مجموعة تضم ثلاثة عجول صغيرة، كان كل منعطف يظهر مزيداً من الفيلة، ثم بدأت الزرافات تلوح أيضاً، بينما انطلق قطعيع من النعام، يضم خمس نعلمات من الكبار و13 نعامة من الصغار، بأقصى سرعة عندما شاهد السيارة، ليتفرق فوق الكثبان المجاورة مثل مجموعة من الديناصورات المنقرضة.

اجتماع الطرائد يمثل هذا التركيز حول مجرى النهر حالة شاذة في هذه المناطق ويمكن أن يجذب الضواري القليلة في الصحراء. وفقاً لستاندر، الذي استقر الآن في هوانيب لكنه يعضي أسابيع أحياناً متجولاً في البرية، تعد صحراء ناميب المكان الوحيد في العالم الذي تعيش فيه الأسود في ظروف بالغة القسوة (وهي المكان الوحيد أيضاً الذي تتجول فيه الأسود بحرية وتصل إلى الشاطئ، بل وتصيد الفقمات أحياناً). انقرضت الأسود تقريباً من الصحراء في ثمانينيات القرن الماضي، قتل أو بالسم على أيدي الصيادين والمزارعين. لكن في أواخر التسعينيات، بدأت تأتي تقارير عن مشاهدتها في الصحراء. فأجريت مسعاً للمنطقة وعُثرت على عدد يراوح بين 20 أسداً و23 أسداً، كما يقول ستاندر.

زاد الرقم إلى أكثر من 150 أسداً اليوم، ويظل صغيراً جداً في سياق صحراء ناميب الممتدة على مساحة 31,200 ميل مربع. يقول ستاندر: «يرواح المدى المعتاد للأسد الواحد في شرق أفريقيا بين 50 كم مربعاً و100 كم مربع، بينما يراوح مدى أسد الصحراء في ناميبيا بين 2,600 كم مربع و34,500 كم مربع، يعني انخفاض كثافة أعداد أسود الصحراء تقليل احتمال رؤية أحدها. لكن الاحتمالات تتضاعف حين يقيم في المخيم عالم مختص شديد التركيز.

في صبيحة اليوم التالي عند انطلاق رحلة السفاري إلى نهر هوانيب، أتى نداء عاجل عبر جهاز اللاسلكي، فجأة، انعطفت الدليل الذي تلقى النداء، ولم يشاهد أسداً منذ وصوله إلى المخيم قبل بضعة أسابيع، ووجه السيارة نحو واد قريب، حيث كان ستاندر بالانتظار مع أحدث اكتشافاته.

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على حد سواء (يتبعثر حطام أكثر من 1000 سفينة على ساحل سكيلتون ما يعطي تسييراً للاسم). لكن الضباب يخدم غرضاً يتجاوز إحياء مسعى الرحالة الراغبين في النزعة، في منطقة يقل فيها المعدل السنوي لهطول الأمطار عن بوصة، يوفر الضباب الكثيف الإماهة الضرورية للزواحف والطيور والثدييات، حيث يتراكم الندى على أوراق النباتات ثم يقطر منها ليشكل بركاً صغيرة من المياه.

تمثل القنوات الجوفية مصدراً مائياً لاغنى عنه للحياة البرية بين الحين والآخر، حيث تثبتق لتكوين واحات زرقاء مذهلة وسط سهول الرمال الشاسعة. تعد الرحلة عبر الكثبان إلى واحد من هذه الينابيع الجوفية محطة مثيرة على الطريق إلى الشاطئ، ويمكن للزيارة أن تشمل أيضاً مشاهدة مستعمرة الفقمات، وحطام من الحديد الصدئ لسفينة غارقة، ومحطة للجوالة تملؤها عظام الحيتان، وبقايا الأفاعي، وقصاصات من الجرائد القديمة تروي أخبار سفن غرقت في غابر الزمان، وغير ذلك من غرائب ساحل سكيلتون وأعاجيبه التي تثير الفضول. لا ريب في أن الرحلة، التي يمكن لتغير الجو أن يختصر برنامجها قبل لحظات من الانطلاق، توفر تجربة سفاري فريدة من نوعها في أفريقيا، وتمثل تعابيراً صارخاً واستكمالاً مثيراً للنزهات المماثلة في الإثارة والمتعة بالقرب من المخيم.

بعد أن أماد ح. ستاندر كسرة الفخار إلى مكانها، سار عائداً إلى المخيم، بينما توجه ضيوفه ودليلهم نحو نهر هوانيب. اخترق الطريق أولاً كتلة نائمة من الصوان، تخفي

تقف على تلة رملية بعيدة، وزرافة وحيدة تقفز على كثيب، على التضاريس المحيطة بقدر ما تبرز الحياة البرية.

المشهد الطبيعي أخذ حقا ويستحق الوصف المفصل. ذرى وعرة من الصوان تبرز نائمة من سهل حصوي لافح، ينحدر بالتدرج من مريض المخيم المرتفع إلى نهر هوانيب، وهو مجرى رملي تجف مياهه على مدار العام تقريباً. لكن الينابيع الجوفية تدعم النظام البيئي حيث أشجار الحراز والأكاسيا ذات الجذور العميقة تنمو من قاع المجرى لتوفر مصدراً غذائياً يضمن بقاء الحيوانات التي تكيفت مع حياة الصحراء، مثل الفيلة والزراف والظباء والغزلان وقروود البايون التي تتجول هائمة حول قنواته المنعرجة.

يبعد موقع المخيم نحو 25 ميلاً عن الشاطئ، وهي مسافة مغطاة كلياً تقريباً بكثبان رملية تذررها الرياح. تتطلب النزهات إلى الشاطئ رحلة صباحية بالسيارة فوق الكثبان والسهول المغمورة بالمياه، ثم عودة بالطائرة بعد الظهر في رحلة تستمر ربع ساعة. الرحلة مشمولة عموماً في الجولات السياحية التي تتضمن الإقامة ثلاث ليالٍ أو أكثر في مخيم هوانيب، لكنها غير مؤكدة، لأن الانتقال بالطائرة يعتمد على الأحوال الجوية المتقلبة على ساحل سكيلتون، إذ كثيراً ما يتشكل على الشاطئ فجأة ضباب كثيف يغطي مساحات واسعة من الكثبان الرملية في دقائق معدودات ويعيق الرؤية تماماً.

يغشى هذه الظاهرة، الناتجة عن اصطدام تيار بنغويلا البارد في المحيط الأطلسي مع الصحراء الحارة، قباطنة السفن والطائرات

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May 02, 2015

travelista

Wander woman **Sophy Roberts** fast-tracks international intelligence on where to be and what to see

→ Roald Amundsen sledged to the **SOUTH POLE**, reaching it on December 14, 1911, five weeks ahead of Captain Robert Scott. In December this year, you can retrace the Norwegian's steps using neither dogs (Amundsen's preference) nor horses (one of Scott's mistakes) but three fully customised Toyota Hiluxes.

The vehicles (two clients per truck) drive the route in convoy from the Ross Ice Shelf, going up and over the Transantarctic Mountains, before crossing the inland plateau to arrive at the South Pole. Supporting the team are a guide/driver with extensive medical and mechanical skills and full logistical back-up to allow for camping on the ice at -30°. The departure on November 29 is one of four eight- to 10-day, 1,000km-long trips (running back to back) that start or finish at **Union Glacier Camp** (www.adventure-network.com) in Antarctica's remote southern Ellsworth Mountains. The trip can be booked through **The Explorations Company** (www.explorationscompany.com), with prices from £110,000 per person for 10 days, including flights in and out of Punta Arenas in Chile.



Above: one of the Toyota Hilux trucks used in The Explorations Company's Antarctic expeditions

→ Trekking in the **RUSSIAN FAR EAST** in search of the rare Amur or Siberian tiger is an adventure being pioneered by Will Bolsover, founder of **Natural World Safaris** (www.naturalworldsafaris.com).

While a sighting is by no means a given (there are only about 400 of these creatures left in the wild), there is still much to lure committed naturalists, including the chance to set up camera traps. You travel by Ski-Doo into the **Durminskoye Forest Reserve** (www.russiatigertracking.com), a three-hour drive from Khabarovsk, and stay in a lodge run by the reserve's director, Alexander Batalov. Bolsover glitizes up the trip, which otherwise relies on simple accommodation, with the return Moscow-Khabarovsk transfer on the Trans-Siberian Railway. A bespoke 10-night Siberian-tiger expedition, including flights from London, starts at £2,850 per person based on two sharing. One of the regions where Bolsover is at his best is **MADAGASCAR**, where he hosts a leg of his \$1m **Journey to Nature's Edge**, designed around 18 critically endangered species all over the world (10 per cent of each trip's cost is donated to Cites – the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna). In this wonderland of curious creatures, Bolsover focuses on the rare black and white ruffed lemur; in the **HIMALAYAS**, he spotlights snow leopards.

→ Outfitter **Scott Dunn** (www.scottdunn.com), meanwhile, is going for easier gains in these



Above: trekking in the Himalayas, part of Scott Dunn's Ultimate Nepal by Helicopter. Below: a ruffed lemur at Andasibe-Mantadia National Park, eastern Madagascar



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Above: a sitting room at Kinsteria Hotel, Monemvasia, Greece. Below: Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe

inaccessible reaches with this month's launch of new helicopter safaris. **Ultimate Nepal by Helicopter** includes flying into the Kingdom of Mustang for a private audience with the king, swooping through the 8,000m-high peaks of **Nepal's** Annapurna Sanctuary, and a two-day trek and choppering to Everest Base Camp, with a stop for morning prayers in Tengboche Monastery, while grounded luxuries can be enjoyed at the newly opened **La Bee Lodge** (www.kerandowneynepal.com) with views onto the Annapurna range. The 10-night Scott Dunn trips cost from £10,540 per person based on two sharing, with return flights from London.

→ As **ZIMBABWE** prepares to open a new international airport at Victoria Falls this summer, the visa process has been made simpler with the recent launch of the Kaza Univisa, a single 30-day tourist visa (issued on arrival to citizens from 40 different countries) for Zambia and Zimbabwe (later in the year it will be rolled out to Angola, Botswana and Namibia). Also significant for Zimbabwe's upswing is the opening of the eight-bedroom **Linkwasha Camp** (www.wilderness-safaris.com; from \$550, all inclusive), its luxury tents and pool overlooking a lively watering hole in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe's largest single protected area. There is significance in the vote of confidence this gives to Zimbabwe: for Wilderness Safaris, a sizeable tourism company listed on the South African stock exchange, Linkwasha is its first foray back into the troubled country since 2000.



Above: San Clemente Palace, Venice

→ **GREECE** too has pockets of wildness, including in the southern Peloponnese. Among the most elegant places to stay is **Kinsteria** (www.kinsteriahotel.gr; from €120), a 13th-century mansion located outside the medieval-castle town of Monemvasia, a three-and-a-half-hour drive from Athens. Now the 27-suite hotel, soulfully decorated by the family that owns it, has a new run of rooms to compete with its original vaulted Byzantine ones: 11 residences (10 one-bedroom, one two-bedroom) and two two-bedroom villas dotted about the 18 acres of vineyards, olive, lemon and orange groves.

→ In **VENICE**, the big news is the reopening of **San Clemente Palace** (www.stregisvenice.com; from €550) under the St Regis brand. This one-time monastery, military outpost and guest home for Venetian nobility – roles played at different times from the 12th to the 17th centuries – has undergone a year of renovations, including the restoration of an 11th-century church consecrated for weddings. Located on a private island in the heart of the lagoon, the newly designed rooms aren't without the requisite brocade, velvet, damask, Murano glass and Burano lace; it's just a great deal fresher, with contemporary, clean-lined furniture and modern artwork making for a welcome glimmer of investment in a city too oft described as sinking. +



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Wilderness Safaris to Build Gorilla and Chimpanzee Lodge Circuit in Rwanda

Wilderness Safaris to Build Gorilla and Chimpanzee Lodge Circuit in Rwanda

18 May 2015

Wilderness Safaris is genuinely proud to announce its investment into the construction of two lodges in Rwanda, adding a new country to its African portfolio and helping to continue building sustainable conservation economies on the continent.

Rwanda, situated as it is along the Western, or Albertine Rift, is one of Africa's most biodiverse regions. It is a haven of rainforest endemism with undoubtedly its most celebrated wild mammal being the iconic mountain gorilla of the Virunga Massif. The country's forests are also home to another of Africa's great apes, the chimpanzee, as well as a multitude of other primates such as the striking golden monkey, a little-known but magnificent inhabitant of the bamboo forest.

It is around these rare and threatened great ape and primate species that Wilderness Safaris Rwanda will build its new lodge circuit. "The opportunity to use the Wilderness Safaris model of responsible ecotourism to contribute to positive conservation and community empowerment in such a unique and exciting environment is exactly why we do what we do", said Keith Vincent, group CEO. "More than that, we have found the Rwanda government, ecotourism industry and conservation community to be nothing but welcoming and hospitable in partnering with us to pioneer a new kind of ecotourism in this inspirational country."

Bisate Lodge, a 12-room sanctuary adjacent to the Volcanoes National Park, will boast spectacular views of the brooding Bisoke, Karisimbi and Mikeno Volcanoes. Aside from setting a new standard of luxury for lodges in the area and offering the perfect base for mountain gorilla trekking, Bisate Lodge will also be a visionary conservation and community project with its first phase focusing on indigenous reforestation of a core 26-hectare site. This will be done in close partnership with the newly constituted 320-member Tuzamurana Cooperative. The lodge, sited within the natural amphitheatre of an extinct volcanic cone, is a new addition to Wilderness Collection and will officially open to guests from mid-2016.

"We are also in discussions with the Rwanda Development Board to develop a lodge in the nearby Gishwati-Mukura National Park just a 15-minute helicopter flight to the south and even more ambitious in the scope of its vision to use responsible ecotourism to effect far-reaching and positive environmental change," continued Vincent.

Just 12 guests staying in six rustic forest cottages will have the privilege of exclusive access to the habituated chimpanzee and golden monkey communities of Gishwati Forest. All revenues generated from these forest activities will go towards the conservation of the brand-new Gishwati-Mukura National Park and the establishment of a connecting forest corridor between the two little-known forests of Gishwati and Mukura. By linking the two, currently separated by 16 kilometres, a combined area of nearly 6 000 ha of Albertine Rift forest and a whole host of endemic mammals, birds, insects and plants will be protected. This will more than triple chimpanzee habitat and allow growth in the population of this vulnerable great ape.

Like Bisate Lodge, Gishwati will also open to guests in mid-2016 and will fall into the Adventures category of Wilderness Safaris camps. Itineraries combining the two camps over five to six nights will be the perfect way to enjoy privileged interactions with two of Africa's great ape species and our closest genetic relatives, and can easily be broadened to enjoy the myriad other attractions of Rwanda.

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THE SEVEN MOST LUXURIOUS SAFARI LODGES IN AFRICA

Africa | Botswana

March 18, 2015 | WORDS BY Richard Holmes

From the Serengeti to the Skeleton Coast, Richard Holmes tracks down seven of Africa's most luxurious safari lodges

An African safari is an adventure that should be on every traveller's bucket-list. But how to choose between the hundreds of lodges scattered from the Serengeti to the Skeleton Coast? Whether you're tracking chimpanzees or marvelling at the migration, these seven lodges will keep you coming back for more.

5. Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp, Namibia

Hoanib isn't the sort of lodge you stumble across, or visit on a whim. For this is one of the most remote camps in Namibia: a land never short on personal space. With just two million people in a country nearly three times the size of Germany, its former colonial ruler, there's enough room for everyone. And so too at this beautiful camp from Wilderness Safaris.

Bedouin-style tents and a playful sense of interior design make this one of the most modern safari camps in Southern Africa, with glass walls letting the desert vistas dominate each canvas-clad suite. Sustainability is key here too, with the camp running entirely on solar power.

Daily wilderness excursions leave at the crack of dawn to avoid the worst of the searing desert heat. One day could see you navigating the dry Hoanib River bed, traversing dusty flood plains and windswept dune fields to emerge on the fog-shrouded shoreline of the Skeleton Coast. Another could have you heading inland in search of the desert-adapted elephants and lions that have made their home here. Whichever it is, the days are utterly memorable. Return to one of the eight suites, each with its own private deck, where a glass of chilled South African wine and an explosion of stars overhead greet weary, dusty travellers at the end of another great day out.

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Johannesburg, mai 2015: Depuis mai 1ère, un nouveau camp agrandi la famille de Wilderness Safaris. Le camp Linkwasha a ouvert ses portes dans une des concessions privées les plus riches en espèces animales dans le parc national Hwange. Le nouveau camp remplira les plus hauts critères de style, de luxe et de confort.

Linkwasha est le camp le plus luxueux à Hwange. Il offre aux touristes sept habitations confortables sous forme de tente ainsi qu'une spacieuse tente familiale. Au total, seuls 18 hôtes ont un accès privé à la faune riche de la

région. Toutes les pièces sont pourvues d'une salle de bain attenante et disposent en plus d'une douche extérieure. En plus, il y a un pool dans la zone principale, une lounge et une bibliothèque. En plus, pour parfaire leur séjour, une terrasse où ils pourront passer des nuits romantiques en dormant sous le ciel étoilé et clair d'Afrique, les attend sur le toit. Un mélange de style contemporain et de lignes bien définies a été combiné avec des éléments traditionnels africains. Grâce à une architecture ouverte vers l'extérieur, les hôtes pourront jouir d'une vue panoramique sur de vastes prairies.

La plus grande concentration de mammifères dans le parc national

La zone de Linkwasha passe en effet pour l'une des régions les plus denses en espèces animales dans tout le Hwange. Le parc national quant à lui, est un habitat s'étalant sur 1,4 millions d'hectares avec une grande quantité d'abreuvoirs où foisonne une pluralité de spécimens faunistiques très variés. En tant que point chaud safari à Hwange, Linkwasha devient toute l'année, le point de départ pour des expéditions de chasse et des randonnées pédestres aux endroits où l'on dénombre les plus grandes concentrations de mammifères dans tout le parc national – des lions et des éléphants, des guépards et des léopards, des hyènes et des girafes.

Le Zimbabwe: une destination safari en plein essor

Zimbabwe est une destination safari en pleine développement. Comme ça, l'ouverture de Linkwasha est futuriste. « Nous avons décidé d'investir dans ce pays car nous croyons qu'il deviendra une destination safari très rentable », dit Keith Vincent, président directeur général de Wilderness Safaris. « Nous sommes sûrs que Zimbabwe aura une rôle significative pour le tourisme safari. » Ceci ne vient pas seulement du fait que le pays a gagné en stabilité politique, en sécurité ou en santé économique ces dernières années. C'est aussi parce que le Zimbabwe est de plus en plus demandé comme destination de vacances – surtout lorsqu'on sait que les recettes du tourisme profitent aux habitants dans le pays et contribuent à la conservation du patrimoine naturel zimbabwéen.

—

Contact Presse:

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Foto: African Bush Camps

Die friedlichen Elefanten des Hwange-Nationalparks sind tägliche Besucher im Somalisa und Somalisa Acacia Camp.

MIT ELEFANTEN AM POOL

Der **Hwange-Nationalpark** in Zimbabwe ist legendär für seine hohe Dichte an Elefanten und Büffeln. Zur Regenzeit, wenn die Termiten ausfliegen, verwandelt sich die Savanne in ein Paradies für Vogelliebhaber. Von Astrid Därr

Mit lautem Krachen brechen die Holzknüppel, die unseren Lagerplatz begrenzen. Nervös lauschen wir dem Lärm der Zerstörung, der uns vor einigen Minuten aus dem Schlaf gerissen hat. Nur wenige Meter von unserem winzigen Kuppelzelt entfernt zerlegen übermütige Elefantenbullen unser Camp. Beim ersten Morgenlicht sind die Rabauken verschwunden, dafür planscht eine Herde von etwa 50 Elefanten im schlammigen Wasserloch. Wir verbringen zwei Nächte an der Detema Picnic Site – eine der neun einfachen „Private Campsites“ im Hwange-Nationalpark.

Wasserlöchern, die mit einer Pumpe versorgt werden. Zu Beginn der Regenzeit ab November verwandelt sich die sonnenverbrannte Savanne dann in einen grünen Dschungel.

Verstreute Knochen

Eine in den 1960er-Jahren erbaute Straße mit rudimentärem Belag führt vom Sinamatella Camp quer durch das Schutzgebiet zum

Main Camp an der östlichen Parkgrenze. Dort erstreckt sich der landschaftlich reizvollste Teil des Parks: Entlang fossiler Flussläufe – Täler, in denen vor Jahrmillionen Wasser floss – führt eine ruppige Piste zu den Kennedy Pans und zur Ngweshla Pan. „Pans“ bezeichnen trockene Senken, die sich zur Regenzeit teilweise mit Wasser füllen.

Am Hippo-Pool auf der Makalolo Pan kann man sehr gut Nilpferde beobachten.



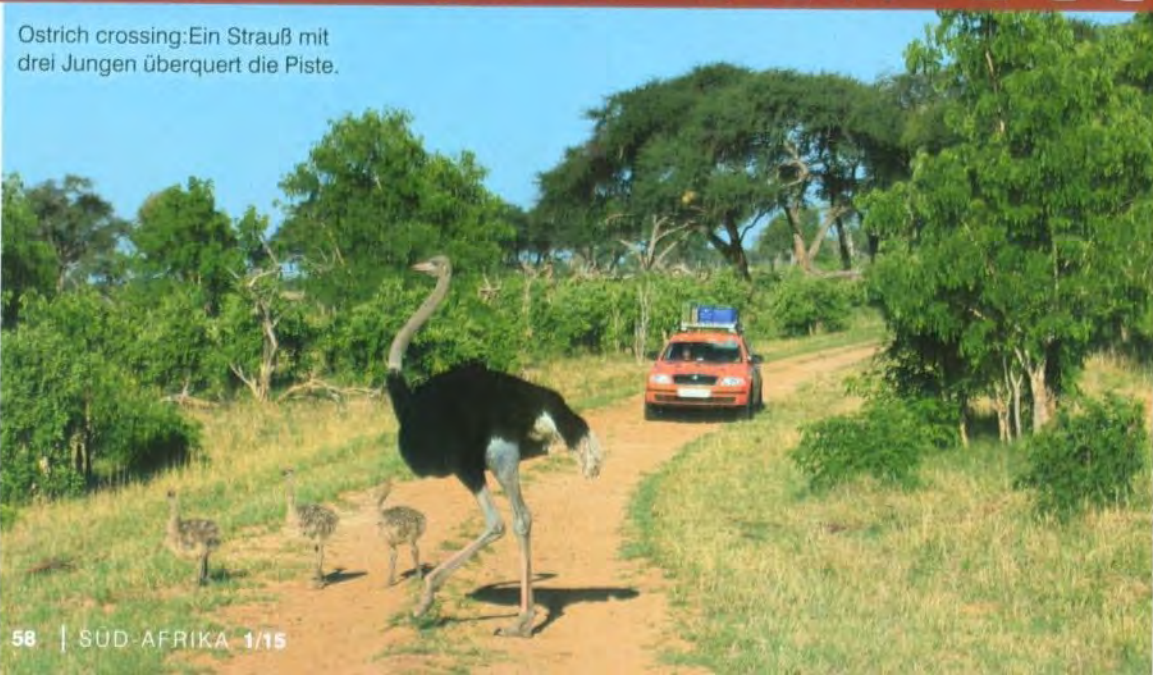
Kein Elektrozaun trennt die Menschen hier von den wilden Tieren. Und so muss man damit leben, dass auch mal eine Löwin um den Platz schleicht und nachts eine Hyäne neugierig am Zelt zupft. Dichter Mopane-Busch dominiert die Landschaft im Norden des 14.500 Quadratkilometer großen Hwange-Nationalpark im Nordwesten Zimbabwes. Am Ende der Trockenzeit sind sämtliche Bäume und Büsche bis zu einer Höhe von einem Meter abgekaut. Kein Grashalm gedeiht mehr auf dem trockenen Kalaharisand. Die Hippos drängeln sich in den verbliebenen

Ein grüner Grasteppich bedeckt die Ngweshla Pflanze mit knorrigen Kameledornbäumen und sandfarbenen Termitenhügeln. Kudus, Zebras, Gnus, Wasserböcke und Strauße ziehen über die weite, von Knochen übersäte Landschaft. Nicht selten versammeln sich hier 200 bis 300 Büffel und Elefanten. Die wilde Schönheit der Savanne und die großen Tierherden erinnern an die Serengeti.

Das Somalisa Camp versteckt sich wenige Kilometer südlich unter den breiten Kronen steinalter Akazien. Aus allen Richtungen führen Tierpfade zum Wasserloch vor den Safarizelten. „Jurassic, ein gewaltiger Bulle mit Stoßzähnen wie ein Mammut, besucht uns fast jede Nacht. Er liebt Seife! Um an seine ‚Bonbons‘ zu kommen, streckt er von oben den Rüssel ins Bad“, erzählt

LÖWEN VOR DEM ZELT

Ostrich crossing: Ein Strauß mit drei Jungen überquert die Piste.



Fotos: Astrid Diarr

Managerin Gloria Browning. Bei seinen nächtlichen Besuchen geht der Dickhäuter nicht nur auf Seifenjagd, sondern reißt gelegentlich auch Wasserleitungen heraus.

Wegen Jurassic kamen sogar schon zwei Ranger der Nationalparkbehörde mit Chili-Gewehren ins Camp. „Normalerweise hasen Elefanten das scharfe Pulver. Doch Jurassic hat nur seinen Kopf geschüttelt und uns verwundert angeschaut“, lacht Gloria.

Das Somalisa-Konzessionsgebiet prägen lichte Akazien- und Teakwälder. „Diese wunderschönen



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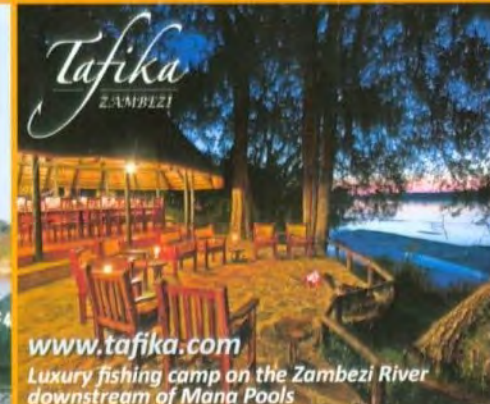
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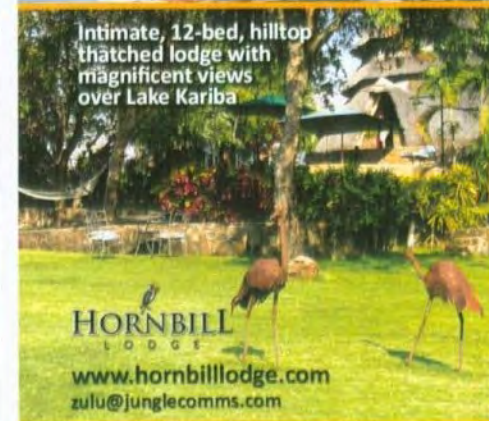
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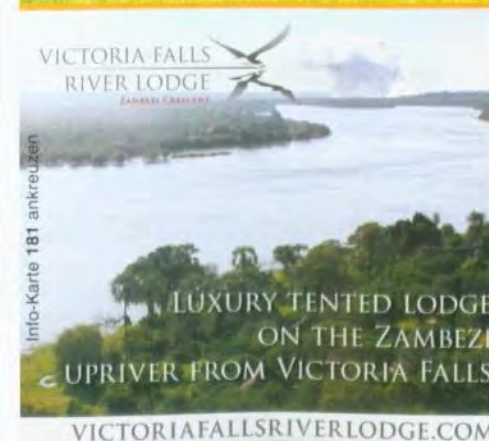
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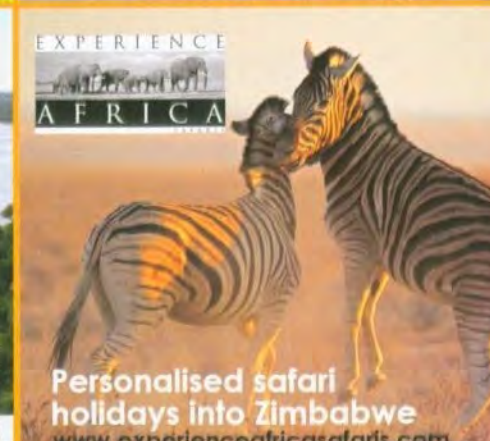


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Kameldornbäume wird es früher oder später nicht mehr geben. Die Elefanten schälen ihre Rinde ab. An den offenen Stellen bohren sich dann Parasiten ins Holz, so dass der Baum langsam abstirbt“, erklärt Guide Albert Paradzai.

Afrikas größter Löwe

Andererseits gestalten die Elefanten aber auch die Landschaft für andere Tiere. Sie sorgen dafür, dass der Busch nicht zu dicht wird und Gras wachsen kann – die Lebensgrundlage für Büffel und Antilopen.

Mit Blick auf grasende Hippos und Elefantenherden beim Schlammbad schlürfen wir unseren Sundowner. „Dahinten sind Löwen!“, unterbricht Albert die andächtige Stimmung und zeigt auf die andere Seite der Pfanne. Wir springen ins Safarifahrzeug, das Albert direkt neben einem mächtigen Löwen mit buschiger Mähne zum Stehen bringt.

„Cecil ist ungefähr zwölf Jahre alt und der größte jemals vermessene Löwe Afrikas“, behauptet

der Guide und beruft sich auf Wissenschaftler des hier ansässigen Lion Research Programs. Cecils gelbe Raubtieraugen scheinen durch uns hindurchzublicken, als wären wir nicht existent. Doch nicht sein Blick, sondern sein Brüllen lässt uns fast das Blut in den Adern gefrieren. Wir spüren förmlich die Vibration des Schalls und riechen seinen Atem, als Cecil der Tierwelt unmissverständlich mitteilt, wer über dieses Revier herrscht. Zurück im Camp genießen wir gerade ein Drei-Gänge-Menü

auf dem offenen Holzdeck, als sich vier Schatten nähern.

Gloria schleicht mit uns an den winzigen Pool. Vorsichtig setzen wir uns auf die Liegen nur zwei Meter vor den Elefanten und beobachten, wie sie sich zufrieden gurgelnd und schnaubend eine Rüsselladung Wasser nach der anderen in den Rachen kippen. Nach zehn Minuten trotten sie fast lautlos im Mondlicht davon.

Südöstlich an die Ngweshla Pan und die Somalisa Konzession grenzen die Linkwasha und

Pantherschildkröten können bis zu 30 Kilo schwer werden.



SUNDOWNER MIT TIEREN

Im Umkreis der Ngweshla Pan sind Löwensichtungen fast garantiert.



Fotos: Astrid Diarr



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Info-Karte 175 ankreuzen

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HWANGE-NATIONALPARK ZIMBABWE

Makalolo Concessions von Wilderness Safaris an. Das ökologisch orientierte Safariunternehmen betreibt vier luxuriöse Lodges in dem 523 Quadratkilometer großen Gebiet.

Das Davison's Camp liegt vor einer großen, wassergefüllten Senke. Auch hier kommen täglich große Elefanten- und Büffelherden zu Besuch. Mit etwas Glück kann man sogar ein Rudel der seltenen Wildhunde beobachten.

Milane kreisen

Hinter dem Camp breitet sich ein herrlicher Teakwald aus. Über sandige Pisten steuert unser Guide Elliot Nobula das Safarifahrzeug zur Makalolo Pan. Elefanten, Gnus, Zebras und einige Rappenantilopen ziehen über die grüne Ebene mit schlanken Lala-Palmen.

Zur Zeit des Termitenflugs verwandelt sich die Savanne in ein Vogelparadies. Ein Gaukler lauert auf einem Termitenhügel, hunderte Milane kreisen über der Ebene, Marabus, Wollhals- und Sattelstörche, Kronenkränche und Löffler versammeln sich an den Wasserstellen.

Am Rande der Pfanne wälzen sich zwei Löwinnen mit drei Jungen faul auf dem Rücken herum. Allein

im Konzessionsgebiet leben über 50 Löwen. Die zwei Männchen dieses Rudels sind seit einigen Tagen verschwunden. „Wahrscheinlich jagen sie außerhalb des Parks“, sagt Elliot. „Die Menschen nahe der Parkgrenze haben kein einfaches Leben: Die Elefanten zerstören ihre Felder und die Löwen erlegen immer wieder das Vieh.“

Als Ted Davison 1928 das Wan- kie Game Reserve gründete, zogen knapp 1.000 Elefanten durch dieses Stück Wildnis. Wegen der extremen Trockenheit zwischen Mai und Oktober hatten die Tiere keine Chance, dauerhaft hier zu bleiben. Deshalb ließ Davison schon damals mehr als 60 Pfannen künstlich bewässern.

1950 erhielt das nach einem Ndebele-Chief benannte Schutzgebiet Nationalparkstatus – seitdem stiegen die Tierzahlen beständig an. In den letzten 20 Jahren litt die Zimbabwe Parks & Wildlife Authority jedoch unter massiver Geldnot. Die Mittel sind aber dringend notwendig, um die Wilderei zu bekämpfen und die Pumpen für die Wasserlöcher instand zu halten.

Nur dank des Engagements von privaten Safari-Lodges und NGOs konnten die Tiere in Hwange auch

während langer Trockenperioden überleben. Allein Wilderness Safaris installierte Solarpanels, Windräder und Dieselpumpen für zwölf Bohrlöcher.

Konzert der Zikaden

Nach der letzten Zählung 2013 leben mehr als 20.000 Elefanten im Park. Zur Trockenzeit verwandeln sie den Busch rund um die Wasserstellen in eine Wüste. „Neben dem Kampf gegen die Wilderei ist eines unserer Ziele, mehr permanente Wasserstellen zu schaffen, damit sich die Tiere zur Trockenzeit besser verteilen und der immense Druck

auf die Vegetation reduziert wird“, sagt der Wilderness-Ökologe Arnold Tshipa.

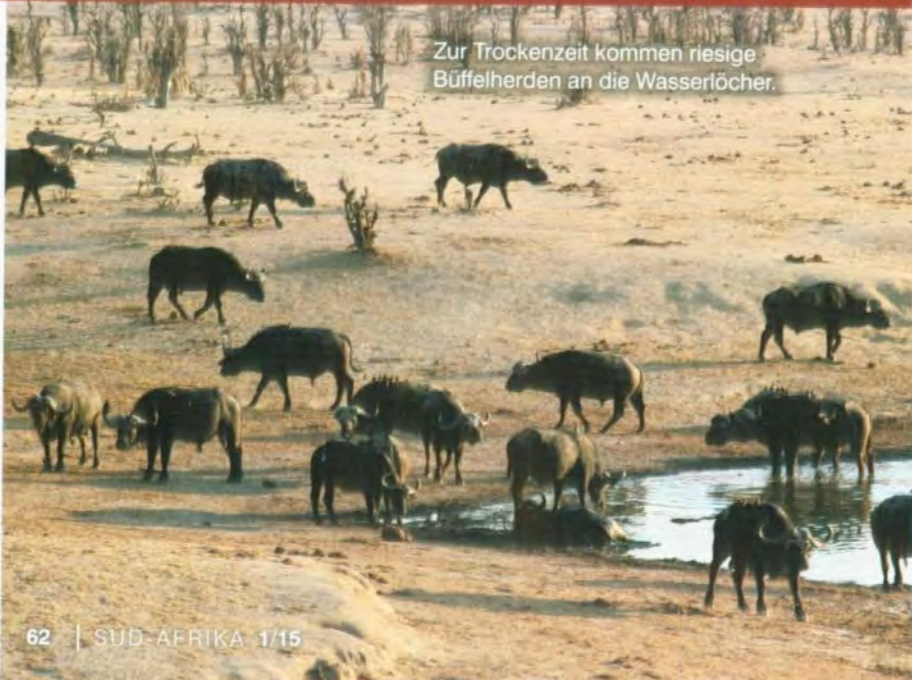
Elliot parkt das Safarifahrzeug am Rande der Makalolo Pan und schenkt uns einen Sundowner ein. Die Wedel der Lala-Palmen spiegeln sich in den Tümpeln auf der Makalolo Pan. Die untergehende Sonne taucht die Savanne in rot-violettes Licht, während Frösche und Zikaden eine Symphonie anstimmen. Zwei Schakale traben über die Ebene und verjagen einen Springhasen, der wie ein Känguru davonhüpft. Wilder und schöner kann Afrika kaum sein.



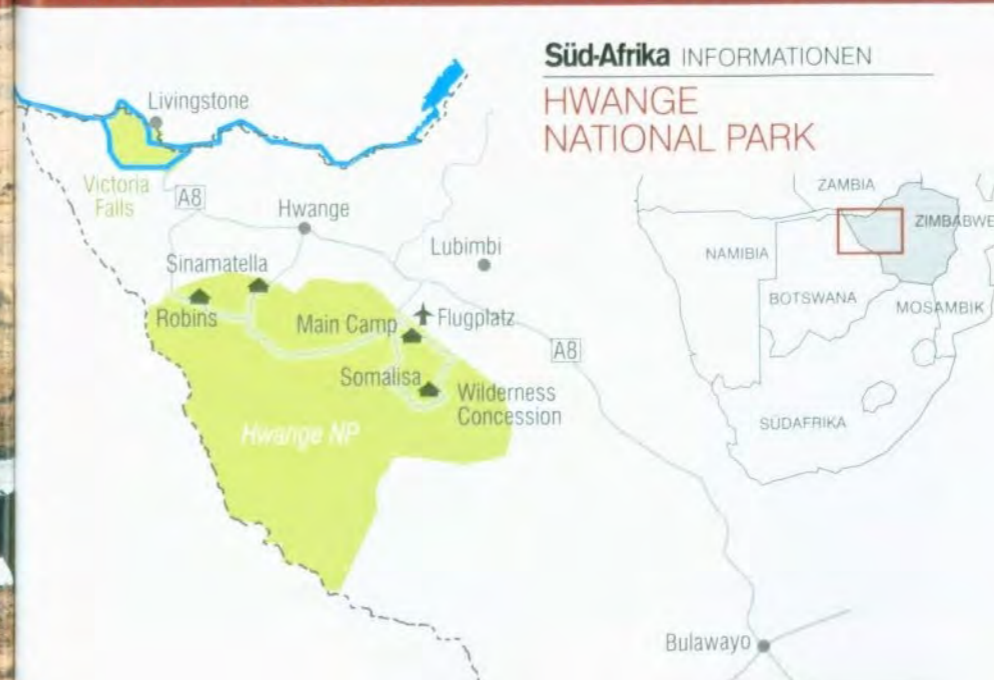
Nur selten tagsüber zu beobachten: Weißgesicht-Ohreule

Fotos: Astrid Darr

VOGELPARADIES IN DER SAVANNE



Zur Trockenzeit kommen riesige Büffelherden an die Wasserlöcher.



Süd-Afrika INFORMATIONEN

HWANGE NATIONAL PARK



ngoma safari lodge - chobe, zimbabwe



victoria falls safari lodge - victoria falls



victoria falls safari suites - victoria falls



victoria falls safari club - victoria falls

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TIERREICH



Der Horizont, den man vom neuen Wilderness Safari Camp Linkwasha aus erspäht, ist im artenreichen Hwange Nationalpark stets von tierischen Umrissen geprägt. © Mike Myers

Ein Königreich für Mensch und Tier hat Wilderness Safaris mit neuen Luxuszelten in Simbawes artenreichstem Nationalpark geschaffen.

Mitten im Reich der Tiere hat das neueste Camp von Wilderness Safaris seine Luxuszelte aufgeschlagen. Das Linkwasha Camp lockt maximal 18 Gäste zum Safariurlaub in Simbabwe, das zu einer der aufstrebenden Safari-Hotspots unter der Sonne Afrikas gilt. Die acht großzügigen, offenen Zelte sowie der Hauptbereich mit Pool, Lounge und Bibliothek liegen im Hwange Nationalpark. Auf

Tierbeobachtung ist man vorbereitet, Ausstattung

wie Outdoorduschen und Sleep Out-Decks für Nächtigung unter dem Sternenhimmel zwingen geradezu zum Blick in die Wildnis. Nach Elefantenherden, Hyänen, Impalas und Raubkatzen braucht man im Linkwasha Camp nicht lange zu suchen. Mit mehr als 100 Säugetier- und 400 Vogelarten stehen die Chancen gut, in Simbawes artenreichstem Nationalpark mit Flora und Fauna auf Tuchfühlung zu gehen. Die von Wilderness Safaris angebotenen Pirschfahrten und Wanderausflüge entlang vielversprechender Fußspuren, helfen dem Glück, im Wüstensand der Kalahari auf Leben zu stoßen, zusätzlich auf die Sprünge.



INFO

www.wilderness-safaris.com



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CP WILDERNESS SAFARIS OUVRE NOUVEAU CAMP AU ZIMBABWE



mmuniqué le presse

Le Linkwasha Camp offre une expérience unique de la nature et du luxe.

Depuis le premier mai un nouveau camp agrandi la famille de Wilderness Safaris. Le camp Linkwasha a ouvert ses portes dans une des concessions privées les plus riches en espèces animales dans le parc national Hwange. Le nouveau camp remplira les plus hauts critères de style, de luxe et de confort.

Linkwasha est le camp le plus luxueux à Hwange. Il offre aux touristes sept habitations confortables sous forme de tente ainsi qu'une spacieuse tente familiale. Au total, seuls 18 hôtes ont un accès privé à la faune riche de la région. Toutes les pièces sont pourvues d'une salle de bain attenante et disposent en plus d'une douche extérieure. En plus, il y a un pool dans la zone principale, une lounge et une bibliothèque.

En plus, pour parfaire leur séjour, une terrasse où ils pourront passer des nuits romantiques en dormant sous le ciel étoilé et clair d'Afrique, les attend sur le toit. Un mélange de style contemporain et de lignes bien définies a été combiné avec des éléments traditionnels africains. Grâce à une architecture ouverte vers l'extérieur, les hôtes pourront jouir d'une vue panoramique sur de vastes prairies.

La plus grande concentration de mammifères dans le parc national

La zone de Linkwasha passe en effet pour l'une des régions les plus denses en espèces animales dans tout le Hwange. Le parc national quant à lui, est un habitat s'étalant sur 1,4 millions d'hectares avec une grande quantité d'abreuvoirs où foisonne une pluralité de spécimens faunistiques très variés.

En tant que point chaud safari à Hwange, Linkwasha devient toute l'année, le point de départ pour des expéditions de chasse et des randonnées pédestres aux endroits où l'on dénombre les plus grandes concentrations de mammifères dans tout le parc national – des lions et des éléphants, des guépards et des léopards, des hyènes et des girafes.

Le Zimbabwe: une destination safari en plein essor

Zimbabwe est une destination safari en pleine développement. Comme ça, l'ouverture de Linkwasha est futuriste. « *Nous avons décidé d'investir dans ce pays car nous croyons qu'il deviendra une destination safari très rentable* », dit Keith Vincent, président directeur général de Wilderness Safaris. « *Nous sommes sûrs que Zimbabwe aura une rôle significative pour le tourisme safari.* » Ceci ne vient pas seulement du fait que le pays a gagné en stabilité politique, en sécurité ou en santé économique ces dernières années.

C'est aussi parce que le Zimbabwe est de plus en plus demandé comme destination de vacances – surtout lorsqu'on sait que les recettes du tourisme profitent aux habitants dans le pays et contribuent à la conservation du patrimoine naturel zimbabwéen.

www.wilderness-safaris.com

www.wilderness-safaris.com/camps/linkwasha-camp

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HIER KLICKEN

Wilderness Safaris eröffnet neues Camp in Simbabwe - Linkwasha setzt Maßstäbe in Sachen Luxus und Tierwelt



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Johannesburg, Mai 2015: Pünktlich zum 1. Mai hat Linkwasha, das neue Camp von Wilderness Safaris im Hwange Nationalpark, Simbabwe, eröffnet. Linkwasha liegt in einer Privatkonzession nahe der Ngamo Plains, die als eine der tierreichsten Regionen in ganz Hwange gilt. Dort setzt das neue Linkwasha Camp fortan neue Maßstäbe in Sachen Luxus, Design und Komfort.

Linkwasha ist das luxuriöseste Camp in Hwange. Es bietet sieben komfortable Zelte sowie ein großzügiges Familienzelt. Insgesamt erhalten nicht mehr als 18 Gäste privaten Zugang zu der reichen Tierwelt der Region. Alle Zelte sind en-suite eingerichtet und verfügen zusätzlich über Outdoor-Duschen. Im auf mehreren Ebenen errichteten Hauptbereich befinden sich ein Pool, eine Lounge sowie eine Bibliothek. Ein Sleep-out-Deck für romantische Nächte unter dem klaren Sternenhimmel Afrikas rundet den Aufenthalt im Camp ab. Offenes Design und moderner Stil werden im Camp mit traditionell-afrikanischen Elementen kombiniert.

Höchste Konzentration an Säugetieren im
Nationalpark

Die Region um Linkwasha gilt als eine der tierreichsten Regionen in Hwange Nationalpark: eine Privatkonzession mit zahlreichen Wasserlöchern, an denen sich eine vielfältige und artenreiche Tierwelt tummelt. Als Safari-Hotspot ist Linkwasha das ganze Jahr über idealer Ausgangspunkt für Pirschfahrten und Wanderausflüge zu Fuß zu der wohl höchsten Konzentration an Säugetieren im ganzen Nationalpark – Löwen und Elefanten, Geparden und Leoparden, Hyänen und Giraffen.

Geheimtipp Simbabwe

Simbabwe zählt zu den aufstrebenden Safaridestinationen, die Eröffnung von Linkwasha ist daher nicht zuletzt zukunftsweisend. „Wir haben uns dazu entschlossen in dieses Land zu investieren“, sagt Keith Vincent, CEO von Wilderness Safaris, „weil wir der festen Überzeugung sind, dass Simbabwe eine wichtige Rolle für Safariturismo spielen wird.“ Nicht zuletzt weil das Land in den letzten Jahren an politischer Stabilität, Sicherheit und Wirtschaftskraft gewonnen hat, steigt auch die Nachfrage nach Simbabwe als Urlaubsziel – zumal die Einnahmen durch den Tourismus im Land den Einwohnern zugutekommen und das Naturerbe Simbawes bewahren.

www.wilderness-safaris.com

www.wilderness-safaris.com/camps/linkwasha-camp

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LINKWASHA CAMP

L'ESPRIT WILDERNESS AU ZIMBABWE



LE LINKWASHA CAMP, DERNIER NÉ DU GROUPE WILDERNESS, A OUVERT SES PORTES EN MAI DERNIER DANS UNE CONCESSION PRIVÉE DU PARC NATIONAL DE HWANGE, AU ZIMBABWE. IL SE VEUT LE CAMP LE PLUS LUXUEUX DE WILDERNESS SAFARIS DANS CETTE RÉGION PROMISE À UN BEL AVENIR TOURISTIQUE GRÂCE À L'INCROYABLE RICHESSE DE SA FAUNE.



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Le Linkwasha Camp s'est installé dans la partie sud-est du parc de Hwange, un emplacement choisi avec soin car situé près d'un des points d'eau les plus fréquentés du parc et à proximité des plaines de Ngamo, réputées pour la variété et l'abondance d'animaux. Dans ces vastes espaces de savane ouverte, parsemée d'acacias et de palmiers, zones humides et marais attirent les grands mammifères durant la saison sèche et des milliers d'oiseaux migrateurs en saison des pluies.

Des tentes spacieuses

Le lodge compte huit tentes safari de luxe dont une familiale (4 personnes) et ne peut donc accueillir qu'un maximum de 18 clients à la fois, offrant ainsi une vraie sensation d'exclusivité. Les tentes sont spacieuses avec un grand lit double pourvu d'une moustiquaire, une salle de bain attenante avec douche extérieure. La décoration se veut à la fois contemporaine (meubles aux lignes épurées...) et africaine (décoration de tissus colorés, artisanat local). Une terrasse permet de profiter du paysage et d'observer les animaux se rendant au point d'eau. Les tentes, habilement dissimulées sous les arbres, sont espacées les unes des autres, garantissant la parfaite intimité de chacun.

Un lodge ouvert sur la nature

Les parties communes se composent de plusieurs grandes tentes abritant le lobby, le restaurant/bar et la bibliothèque. Là aussi la décoration est un habile mélange entre style moderne et tradition africaine. Le lieu est chaleureux, surtout le soir quand un feu est allumé dans la cheminée de la bibliothèque. Une très grande terrasse prolonge l'ensemble sur plusieurs niveaux, offre une vue parfaite sur les plaines de Ngamo, et conduit à une piscine avec vue sur les animaux sauvages. Sur demande, il y est même possible d'y passer la nuit sous le magnifique ciel étoilé de l'Afrique australe.



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LES POINTS FORTS

Un lodge tout juste ouvert, quintessence de la marque Wilderness.

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Un camp exclusif de 8 tentes dans une concession privée

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LA MEILLEURE SAISON

Le parc de Hwange est ouvert toute l'année car chaque saison se caractérise pour la présence d'animaux différents et des paysages sans cesse changeant.

De décembre à mars, l'été austral se caractérise par des pluies fréquentes. Les plaines de Hwange sont alors couvertes d'une herbe verte qui attire de nombreux herbivores (antilopes, buffles, hippotragues noirs, zèbres, gnous, élands...) accompagnés de leurs jeunes et des ...prédateurs ! Les éléphants sont moins nombreux car une partie de la population a migré au Botswana voisin. C'est aussi une belle saison pour observer les oiseaux.

En avril-mai, le début de la saison sèche draine les animaux vers les points d'eau, en particulier, les éléphants qui forment alors de grands troupeaux.

De juin à novembre, la saison sèche est à son paroxysme. La savane est dépourvue d'herbe et tous les animaux se rencontrent alors près des points d'eau en groupe très nombreux.

NOTRE CONSEIL

Le parc national de Hwange est sans nul doute le meilleur endroit pour réaliser un safari au Zimbabwe. Il peut être une destination safari à part entière. La diversité de ses paysages et de sa faune permettent d'y passer deux à trois jours sans se lasser. Un séjour de deux nuits est donc conseillé d'autant qu'il est possible de combiner ce séjour avec les autres lodges Wilderness Safari situé dans d'autres parties du parc ou encore au Botswana.

SAFARI au ZIMBABWE

L'agence SAFARI WORLD IMAGE propose plusieurs idées de safari au Zimbabwe et dans le parc de Hwange à découvrir sur son site: www.safariworldimage.com

Les lodges proposés peuvent être changés selon vos choix. Dans le parc national de Hwange, nous vous proposons en effet d'autres lodges : **The Hide, Somalisa Camp.**

Vous pouvez ensuite continuer votre découverte du Zimbabwe en visitant la région des Matopos pour y découvrir les peintures rupestres des San (**Amalinda lodge** et **Big Cave Camp**), sans oublier bien sûr les chutes Victoria (**Victoria Falls Safari lodge**).



Le parc national de Hwange

La Wankie Game Reserve, fondée en 1928 à l'initiative d'un jeune ranger de 22 ans, Ted Davidson, devient le parc national de Hwange en 1949. Au début du XIXe siècle, ces territoires désertiques étaient réservés à la chasse des rois Ndebele. A l'arrivée des Européens, ces terres sont alors dévolues à l'élevage et la chasse s'intensifie au point de décimer les populations d'animaux. Faute de faune et de terres arables, ces vastes étendues à la frontière du Botswana et situées à l'extrémité nord-est du désert du Kalahari, sont peu à peu abandonnées. C'est alors qu'intervient Ted Davidson. Il a l'idée de faire creuser des points d'eau alimentés avec des pompes pour faire revenir les animaux. Ted Davidson consacra 30 ans de sa vie à l'aménagement du parc ! Désormais, avec 1,4 million d'hectares, le parc national de Hwange est le plus grand du Zimbabwe et un des plus connus d'Afrique avec une population d'éléphants estimée à environ 40 000 individus. On y dénombre 107 espèces de mammifères et plus de 400 espèces d'oiseaux. Parmi les animaux présents, citons le léopard, le rhinocéros, le lycaon, le guépard, la hyène, l'otocyon, l'hippotrague.



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Les éléphants du Hwange

Grâce aux points d'eau, la population des éléphants du Hwange a connu une croissance constante au point de devenir une des plus grandes d'Afrique. Ici, selon les saisons, les éléphants vont et viennent entre le parc de Chobe, au Botswana, et le parc de Hwange. Ils sont très nombreux à Hwange pendant la saison sèche grâce aux points d'eau. Dès les premières pluies, ils se mettent en route pour rejoindre le Botswana. Ce sont alors de longues files d'animaux qui s'égrenent dans la poussière, profitant de chaque point d'eau pour se baigner et de désaltérer à grands bruits.

La concession de Linkwasha

Le lodge se trouve dans la concession de Linkwasha, dans la partie sud-est du parc national de Hwange. D'une superficie de 52 300 ha, elle se compose essentiellement de savane, de forêts de tek, de zones humides et d'une vingtaine de points d'eau où il est possible d'observer de très nombreux animaux (éléphant, buffle, zèbre de Burchell, girafe, éland, koudou, gnous, cobs, lion, léopard....). Les safaris sont réservés aux clients du lodge ce qui fait que vous ne croiserez quasiment jamais d'autres véhicules.

Safaris en 4×4 ou à pieds

Dans la concession, vous pourrez effectuer des safaris en 4×4 ou à pieds en compagnie d'un ranger. Si ces safaris se font généralement le matin et en fin d'après-midi, il est possible de partir à tout moment de la journée afin de découvrir d'autres facettes de la nature africaine. Il est bien sûr possible d'effectuer des safaris dans le parc de Hwange, tout proche.

Birdwatching

La diversité des habitats permet à une multitude d'oiseaux de coexister sur le territoire pour la plus grande joie des ornithologues. 50 espèces de rapaces y ont été recensées et environ 400 autres espèces d'oiseaux fréquentent le lieu.

Protection de la nature

Le groupe Wilderness Safaris est tout particulièrement engagé dans la protection de la faune et de la flore africaine. Chaque lodge participe donc à divers programmes grâce à la présence d'un chercheur à demeure. En fonction de ses disponibilités, il pourra vous faire découvrir et participer à diverses actions telles que la tournée de la vingtaine des points d'eau de la concession (comptage des animaux, entretien...), la sensibilisation des villages et des enfants au problème du braconnage, ou la collecte des données sur certaines espèces (lions, lycaons...).

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Le Zimbabwe pratique

Adresse utile en France :

Ambassade du Zimbabwe : 12, rue Lord-Byron, 75008 Paris. Tél. : 01 56 88 16 00.

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Adresse utile sur place :

Ambassade et consulat de France : 74/76 Samora Machel Avenue, Old Reserve Bank Building, PO Box 1378. Harare. Tél. : (263) (4) 703 216 ou 704 069.

Formalités : Votre passeport doit être valable six mois après la date du retour. Visa obligatoire à demander à l'ambassade (formulaire à remplir avec deux photos et 70 € en espèces. Il est aussi possible de l'obtenir à l'aéroport en arrivant moyennant 50 \$ environ. Attention, dans tous les cas, il faut avoir deux pages vierges face à face dans votre passeport.

Santé : Aucun vaccin obligatoire. Un traitement antipaludéen est à envisager si vous allez vers les chutes Victoria ou le lac Kariba. L'eau du robinet est potable mais, par prudence, préférez l'eau minérale. Ne pas se baigner dans l'eau douce (lac Kariba) en raison des risques de bilharziose.

Argent : L'unité monétaire est le dollar zimbabwéen (ZWD). 1 euro = 6,8 ZWD mais le dollar américain est partout utilisé. Mieux vaut en apporter et si possible des billets récents. Les principales cartes de crédits sont bien acceptées dans les hôtels et les restaurants. Les banques sont ouvertes du lundi au vendredi, de 8h30 à 1 h (sauf le mercredi : fermeture à 13h) et le samedi, de 8h30 à 11h.

Langue : Anglais et nombreux dialectes selon les ethnies rencontrées.

Décalage horaire : + 1 h hiver. Pas de décalage en été.

Electricité : Prises anglaises donc adaptateur nécessaire.

Téléphone : Pour téléphoner de la France vers le Zimbabwe : composez le 00 + 263 + numéro de votre correspondant précédé de l'indicatif de la région ou de la ville (Harare : 4).