



July 2021



SOCIAL DISTANCING: Even when rhino tracking

How to practice responsible rhino tracking

BONS ROMAN

Rhino tracking is an incredibly immersive experience, where our guests get the opportunity to leave the comfort of the vehicle to put their boots on the ground and appreciate wildlife tracking.

The guests are rigorously briefed, firstly the evening before the tracking, when they are advised of the general “rules” and housekeeping, like wearing comfortable walking shoes and dark clothing. Early the next morning the trackers head out and communicate with the camp guides about where the rhinos can be found.

On arrival at the sighting, the guide goes over the hand signals and protocols, and once the tracker is comfortable everyone can start taking photos and enjoy the sighting. The guests then get out of the car and start making their way quietly towards the rhino.

If the rhino is comfortable and completely unaware of the party, the tracker will signal guests can sit in a half moon observing the rhino in its natural surroundings and photos can be taken. If the camera equipment is noisy, the tracker might signal the guests to stop taking photos.



SINGLE FILE: Approaching the sighting



SMILE: You make the sun shine brighter!

Individual commitment to make a civilization work

ALEXANDRA MARGULL

Greetings Wilderness Namibia Team!

As we move into August, I would like us to focus our attention on positive change and the celebration of all the unique and diverse cultures that exist within our Wilderness Family. This year we will be celebrating Heritage Day in the midst of the most disruptive time in recent memory. So instead of retreating into our own worlds, I would like to encourage you to celebrate life and the richness that our diversity brings to Wilderness, and across our continent and abroad. Our interactions with each other allows us to grow and build each other up as we learn about different cultures and share a common sense of purpose. At Wilderness this is about how “our journeys change lives”. This is so true not only for our guests but also how we motivate, inspire and push each other to be successful.

With the Tokyo Olympics in full swing it reminds me of a quote I read from Phil Jackson: *“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team”*. This is off course not only true for those competing in the Olympics, but also for us at Wilderness and the various teams we engage with and work in.

Remember, we are all united and it is our individual commitment that makes a team work, a company work, a society work and a civilization work. Although the last 17 months have been tough please remember that tough times don’t last, tough teams do.

So this month we want to celebrate all of you, our heroes. This pandemic has taught us that hard times don’t create heroes. It is during the hard times when the “hero” within us is revealed and this is what you have shown us.

You all bring so much love and beauty into our world just by being in it, and it makes everyone a little bit happier. So I encourage you to let your mind be free and celebrate your strength, your uniqueness and continue to bring this spirit to your work.

Continue to nurture your talent with your hard work and dedication and SMILE – after all, the sun shines brighter when you smile, so guys, keep smiling!

Until next time, take care and be safe.

DESERT OASIS

Day in the life of a Hoanib guide

From sunrise to sunset

JENNIFER FOURIE

“Being a guide is such a cool job! It’s not a job at all, it’s just fun!” I am sure everyone that is a guide or has ever been a guide has heard this line, either from a guest or a colleague. And yes, it is, to be out in nature every day seeing incredible game or scenery, or just nature in action, is truly a privilege none of us takes for granted.

So for any young and aspiring guides out there, just know, you are signing up for a front row seat in nature’s great cinema. But, as in every job, it is not just the glamour of taking photographs, laughing and hosting guests, etc., there is a lot of hard work behind the scenes.

Your day starts way before sunrise, quick coffee and off you go, making sure your vehicle is spotless, last checks for equipment and then load some drive snacks or breakfast. Then the vital wake up call for your guests, they don’t need an alarm, you are the alarm! Hosting guests for breakfast can be a rather quiet experience as no one should be awake at this hour in any case, but onwards and upwards, and after the second cup of coffee, conversations start flowing and you can feel the excitement of the guests to get the day started.

Usually, the drives at Hoanib go into the riverbed looking for game, or going to Mōwe Bay. Either way, you are bound to have fun, expect the unexpected and be ready with your camera – anything from steenbok to predators could be on the cards and off course the desert-adapted elephants usually make their appearance.

Back to camp and if you’ve had a full day’s activity, then quickly clear out your car, put your feet up, refresh and meet the guests for pre-dinner drinks or fireside stories. Yes the days are long, but also, this is possibly one of the most rewarding jobs one can do.

© All photos by Moses Sheehama



FOGGY MORNINGS: A regular occurrence



STILL UNNAMED: Youngest addition to the elephant family



STARRY SKIES: absence of any light pollution makes for excellent star photography

NEW FACES

Nam News welcomes two new columnists

JENNIFER FOURIE

The Nam News is very excited to announce as of this issue, there will be two new columnists contributing to the paper.

Selma Benjameni: a wise old soul in a vibrant young lady’s body, and currently the GM at Little Kulala. She will be writing a column called “Contemplations”, thoughts and ideas, and daily motivation that is bound to get us out the door.

Joryn Barnard: free-spirited, opinionated and straightforward, she speaks her mind no matter what. She will be writing the column “Broken Filter”. *Note from the editor: Please note, this column is not edited and is entirely the words and thoughts of the writer.*



CONTEMPLATIONS: New column by Selma



BROKEN FILTER: New column by Joryn

LATEST NPS STATS

Namibia dominates the Top 10

ALEX CHAPLIN

It is such a pleasure to share the latest NPS Stats, as Namibia absolutely dominates the Top 10 camps in the whole group. As Desert Rhino Camp is still closed, five out of our six open camps are in the Top 10.

Special congratulations to Doro Nawas, which is the No. 1 camp across the company.

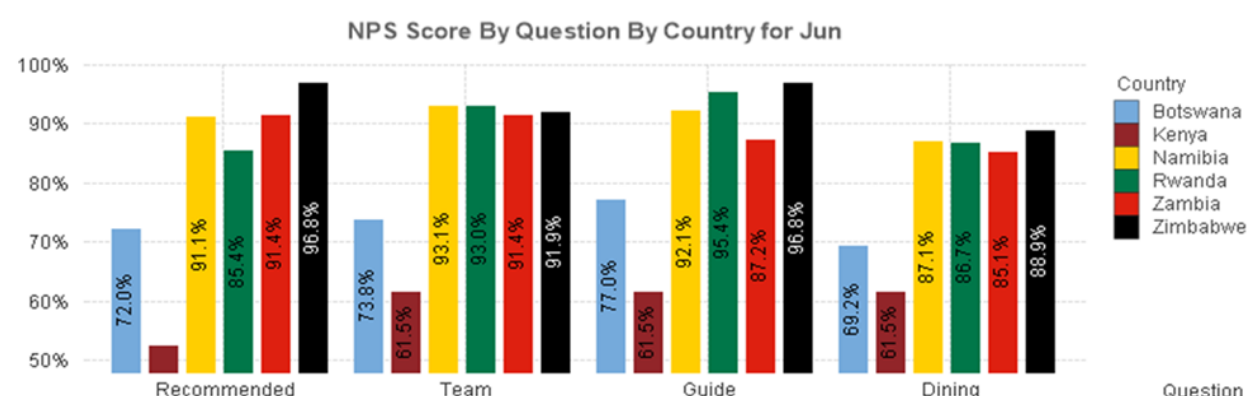
A special mention goes out to all the guides who have gone the extra mile and contributed to the improved scores.

The Hoanib team did an incredible job to increase all of their scores, and is now firmly in the Top 10.

Well done to every single person, your hard work and dedication is greatly appreciated!

Good luck out there and keep up the good work.

Supplier	Recommend	Team	Guide	Dining
Doro Nawas	100.0%	100.0%	86.2%	100.0%
Shumba	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Chikwenya	98.2%	86.6%	98.2%	79.6%
Little Kulala	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%
King's Pool	96.7%	90.6%	96.7%	90.6%
Linkwasha	95.8%	95.8%	95.8%	95.8%
Bisate	94.3%	100.0%		97.1%
Damaraland	94.1%	100.0%	100.0%	94.1%
KDL	92.8%	92.8%	92.8%	86.8%
Hoanib SC	89.6%	94.0%	98.3%	89.6%



GUIDE TRAINING

Naukluft Mountains excursion

ABNER SIMEON

The training team had a trip to the Kulalas during July, and as the camps were fairly quiet, it was an ideal opportunity to get the guides out of the camp surrounds and into the Namib-Naukluft National Park.

Guests who stay three nights or longer have the opportunity to do a day trip to the park and explore with their guide.

The guides who joined me were Gabriel from Little Kulala and Fanuel, Richel and Manfred from Kulala Desert Lodge.

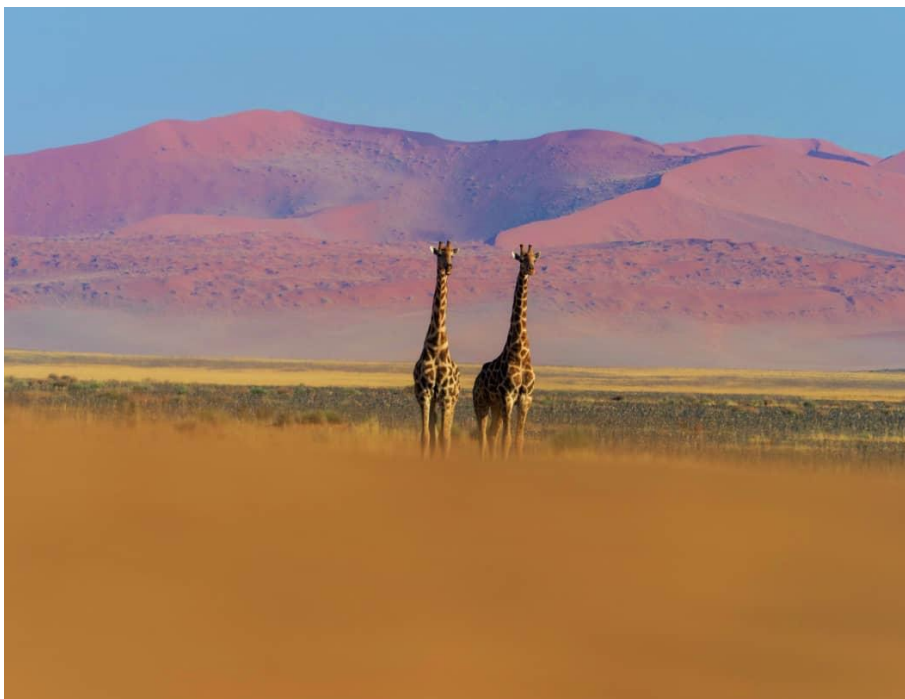
We visited the Neuras wine farm and spent about five hours in Naukluft. We explored the springs and even found leopard tracks.

It is important to sometimes take the day and just spend it in nature, and in an informal environment review fauna and flora species.

It was a lovely day and I thank the the guides for for spending this time with me and refreshing our knowledge.



NAMIB NAUKLUFT PARK: Guides' day out



GIRAFFE IN THE DUNES: What a sight!

GIRAFFE ON KULALA

Not one, but two!

Partners in crime

JENNIFER FOURIE

No, you are not seeing double. The Kulala staff reported that there are now two giraffe on the reserve, casually browsing in the river beds and using the Little Kulala waterhole for refreshment.

There was great enthusiasm as we imagined the possibility of cute and cuddly giraffe babies, but the hopes were unfortunately dashed when eagle-eyed Johan confirmed they are both males. Well, two are still better than none, and in this environment, a sighting like this is an absolute gem!

© Photo by Selma

WAR ON WASTE

Food trainers declare war!

DEWALD KOTZE

The war is on in the Wilderness food journey. War on waste, supply chain management and local empowerment are on the cards for the next few weeks in the training teams.

The world's food system is in trouble and it isn't going to improve without our help. One third of the world's food supply is wasted, we are chopping down forests to grow more food, but a billion people are still going hungry.

Kulala and Hoanib were the first Namibian camps to receive on-the-ground training on how we are going to tackle this global issue. By making small changes in our daily operations we can help the environment.

Our goal is to reduce our waste by half by 2022. We can not manage what we don't measure. Our camps create about 1.5 tonnes of waste in a month, and 30% of that is food waste. By reducing this by 25% this year, we can already save millions.

Little Kulala, Kulala and Hoanib have started the process by separating their waste into three categories. Our plan for this waste is as follows;

1. Plate waste – reduce this by 34%
2. Prep waste – reduce this by 45%
3. Spoiled waste – reduce this by 21%

The camps are now implementing a bucket system, and weighing and recording the waste on each shift.

The camp Food and Beverage ambassadors will drive this process, and the regional ambassadors will keep you updated on the new and improved ways we are dealing with our waste.

Remember to reduce, recycle, review, refuse and rethink wherever you can to all do our bit for the environment.

Watch out for the next Nam News, where we will discuss even more ways we are looking at reducing waste and the relevant training.



WAR ON WASTE: The Kulala Desert Lodge team in training.

CONSULTANT LIFE

The art of keeping a straight face

The weird, the funny and the downright strange ...

NATHALY AHRENS

What comes to mind when you think of the Travel Shop? Especially if you don't work at Head Office? Images of a sterile workplace, serious-looking individuals rapidly typing away on their keyboards ... things could not be further from the truth ...

We are a lively bunch, we are colourful, we are loud (very) and most of the time, first to arrive for Friday Drinks. Well, this article is going to explain why on a Friday, we are pretty ready to have a cold glass of something, and laugh our way into the weekend. I've asked the consultants to list some of the most outrageous feedback they've received, in the form of complaints or comments from guests. Here is their list:

Some complaints:

1. "We are very unhappy because we overshot Windhoek by two hours, we couldn't find the directions itinerary".
2. "We couldn't use the reverse gear of the car for the whole trip because the car rental company never showed us how to use it".
3. "We will not come back to Namibia, it has too much desert".

What happens in the desert, stays in the desert:

1. A waitress very kindly offered guests cannabis, not canapes at sunset in camp.
2. A guide once told guests that male zebra are black on white and females are white on black. The guests subsequently argued the whole trip which gender the zebra are.
3. The river came down slightly and the game drive vehicle got stuck, so the guests were asked to get out of the car so that plans could be made to get it out. One of ladies refused, said her shoes will be ruined. Staff had to shovel away all the mud until they reached dry ground until she finally agreed to get out of the car.
4. Rhino tracking for newlyweds. From a great distance, the rhino did a mock charge; the husband immediately grabbed his new wife and used her as a shield.

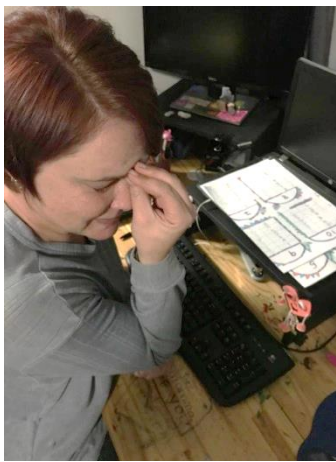
Some strange requests or expectations:

1. "My wife loves hippos, so excited to get to Serra Cafema!"
2. "My group is booked at Little Kulala, when they go for the walk on the second afternoon, please can you book an aircraft to drop a basket connected to a parachute with ice cream to have halfway on the walk?"

And these, my dear colleagues, in the words of the famous singer Alanis Morissette, "are the reasons we drink".



TRANSPORT ISSUES: "A Ford Ranger 4x4 is way too big for us, please book a small sedan" ... Itinerary Sossusvlei, Swakop, Damaraland, Kaokoland and Etosha



SAY WHAT? "We love big cities and shopping, please book 6 nights Lüderitz and 1 night Etosha"



SPECIAL AMENITIES: "Do the Wilderness camps have lion repellent or should we bring our own?"

CONTEMPLATIONS

Isolation thoughts

SELMA BENJAMENI

Today is the day
Every day is the day
Life waits for no one
Seize the moment, seize the day
Dance like nobody's watching
Watch the sunset
Smell the flowers
Eat the delicious cake
Drink that delicious glass of wine or
whatever you enjoy
Be nice to a stranger. Show sympathy
Dress up, even if you are not going
anywhere

BE ALIVE

What if we are never ready?
What if, this is as close to being ready that
we will ever actually be?
What if, the biggest regret we have when
we look back on our lives is that we
wasted time?
What if, the last thought we have when our
life comes to an end is that we didn't do
enough living whilst we were alive?

My friend, this is it.
Put your hand on your chest and feel that
heartbeat pulsing through your body.
That's all you need to be ready
That is truly all the purpose you ever
really need

You my friend, are alive
So live

LOST IN NAMIBIA

How well do you know your country?

JENNIFER FOURIE

This is a new section called "Lost in Namibia".

If you are a passenger on a road trip, fell asleep and woke up to see picture 1 or 2 or 3, would you know where you are?

Here are some clues:

1. No cars allowed
2. It is far, but you can't get Moedeloos yet...
3. Not Kulala

Answers will be in the next Nam News.

If you've taken a photo that might get your colleagues pondering, please send it to the Nam News Editor on +264 81 620 9266.



KUNENE LIVING

Serra Cafema staff keeping busy *And getting vaccinated*

JENNIFER FOURIE

The Serra Cafema team is going through some ups and downs in terms of occupancies. Some days they are very busy and going all the way with special dinners, gin stops and sundowners, but when the quiet days come around, there is still lots to do.

They had some quiet days during the month and took the opportunity to do a deep clean in camp. All canvas and windows were washed, the team even got onto the thatched roofs and cleaned off the foliage, etc.

The Serra Cafema team must also be commended for their vaccination drive. For context, remember everything is approximately a seven to nine hours' drive away – so a day's driving – and even though it is one of the most remote corners of Namibia, the team has completed two vaccination drives. For the first one, Radimar took his team of eight on a 22-hour drive – that covered 615 kilometres in three days – to Sesfontein. Hoanib hosted them for two nights and everyone got their first dose of the jab.

On the 22nd of July, the Ministry of Health and Social Services arrived in camp to vaccinate a total of 10 permanent staff with their first jabs, as well as 39 community members. This means at the moment all staff in camp have had their first vaccination. Well done to the Cafema team for being part of the solution!

© Photo by Carina and Elias



SUNRISE: A pink Kunene



QUIET DAYS: In between guest days, there is always time for a good deep clean



VACCINATIONS: All 10 Serra Cafema staff and 39 community members were vaccinated during the MoSS campaign

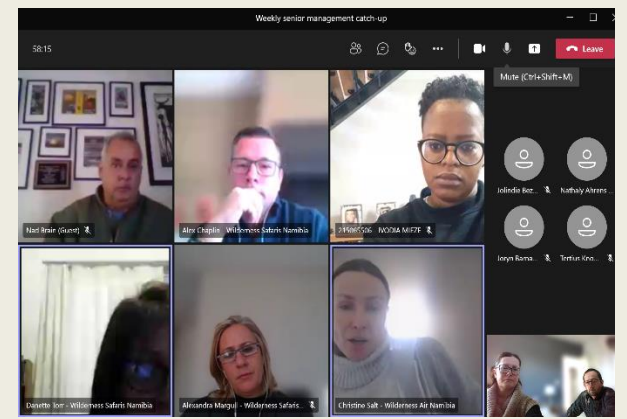
TAKING THINGS ONLINE

From Monday mornings to Friday afternoons

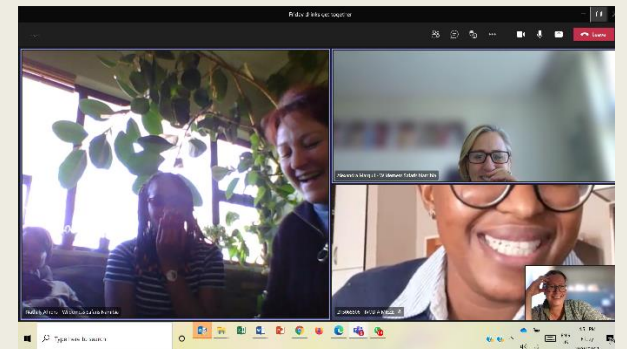
JENNIFER FOURIE

Since this pandemic struck, we have had to adapt how we do business in a big way. Offices were closed, everyone scattered in different directions, and gone are the days where we would gather in meeting rooms and around the water cooler. Wilderness, like all other companies, discovered new ways to meet and catch up with colleagues, from WhatsApp to Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Life had to go on. From Monday morning meetings to Friday afternoon drinks, everything went online. We have a culture of hugging, squeezing and sitting in each other's spaces, and we had to make do with these online platforms.

We can't wait until we are all together again, under one roof, laughing hard and working harder!



MONDAY MORNINGS: Very serious conversations



FRIDAY AFTERNOONS: Not so serious

CORONIALS

Travel shop staff doing their bit

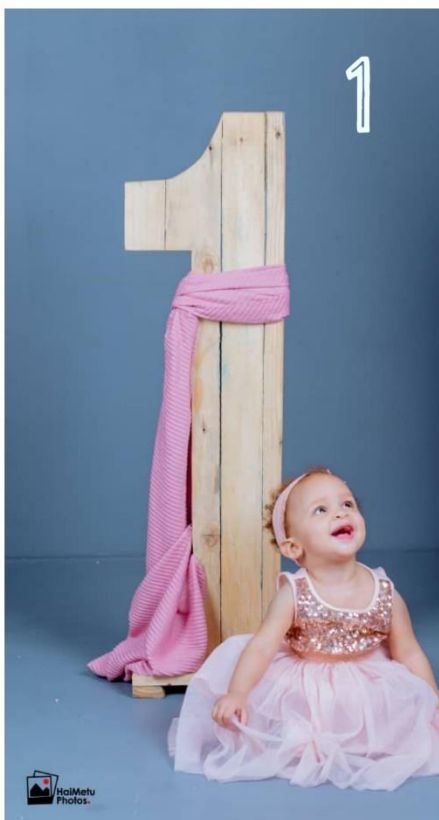
JENNIFER FOURIE

It is well-known now that all babies born during pandemic will be called "Coronials", a play on Millennials and Corona. It's not really a fact, but it is rather nice to joke with friends who took this time to get pregnant and have babies.

The Wilderness staff also did their bit to grow our sparsely populated country's numbers, and we welcome all new little Wilderness bundle of joys.

1. Meet Tanith's baby Ruhani Elzira Lennitch, born on the 9th of July 2020, weighing 3.4 kg
2. Janice gave birth to baby Nina who weighed 3.2 kg
3. Uvatera's baba weighed 3.6 kg at birth on the 10th of February 2021

Welcome to the world, Wilderness babies! Watch out for all those aunties with the skimmers on their shirts who want to pinch your chubby cheeks!



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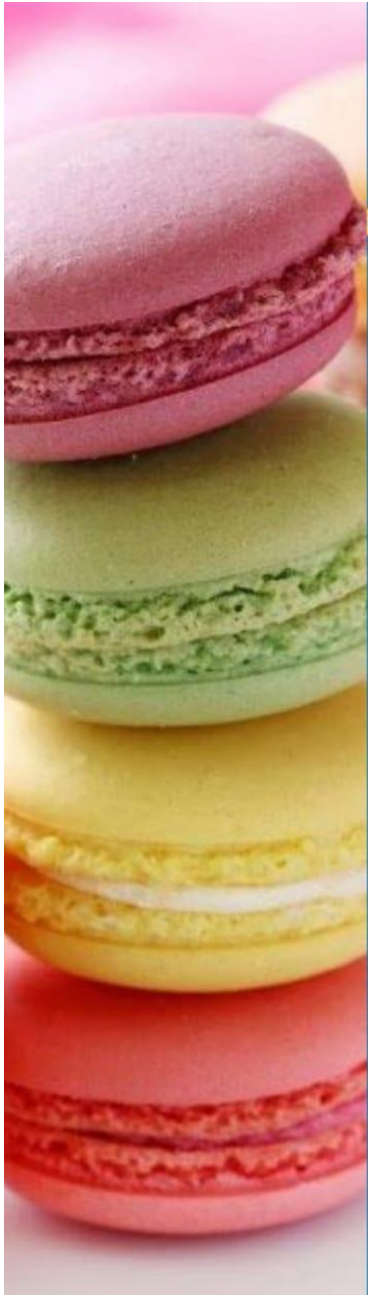
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Vanilla Cupcakes x6	N\$90.00
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Assorted Loaves (min order of 4)	N\$65.00

SAVOURY BITES

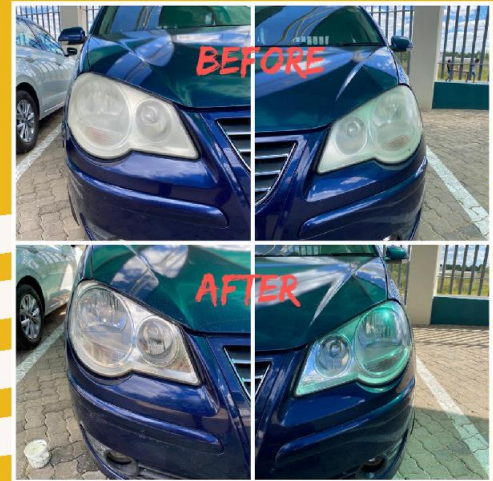
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WILDERNESS AIR

Pilots signed off

WILLIE VAN DER MARK

Signing off Willem and Kieron out on the 210s over the last two days has made me realise again why I love aviation. I am proud to say that all the crews thus far have proven to me that we have the best in the business.

This time of the year is notorious in Namibia for the “east wind” – a very strong wind making its way to the coast, becoming hotter as it drops over the escarpment. These can reach up to 40 knots on a good day, and even in these circumstances, the pilots handled themselves like the professionals they are.

I am confident in all the Wilderness Air pilots’ abilities to transport our guests safely and comfortably around Namibia.

Over the last few months, a total of seven pilots have been placed back online, which in itself is a good sign of things to come. We are all optimistic about what lies ahead, and the road to full recovery of tourism in our beautiful country.



210 SIGN-OFF: Willem and Kieron were signed off on the 210 by Willie



WINEMAKER VISIT: Andries Burger from Paul Cluver Wines training staff at Little Kulala

WINEMAKER VISIT

Paul Cluver winemaker visits Little Kulala

From the grape to the table in the desert

JENNIFER FOURIE

Wine is a bit of a mystery for most of us, you take grape juice, then add yeast, stir it a bit and wait ... and magic happens. All of a sudden you can taste peaches, flint or grassiness. A true mystery.

Under the Influence is our trusty wine supplier out of Cape Town, but they are so much more than this – they supply us with the knowledge and confidence to serve these beautiful wines in our camps through training visits about twice a year, and even sometimes introduce us to the winemakers directly.

During July, the winemaker from Paul Cluver, Andries Burger, visited Little Kulala and conducted wine training on the wines from the estate. Selma mentioned it was such a worthwhile visit and all the service staff were enthused again to sell wine and broaden their knowledge.

Andries also had a wonderful time and wrote in the guest book: “*What an amazing experience it was! From the warm welcome from Selma to Simon showing us around and spoiling us. Amazing people and staff. A little heaven under the stars*”.

© Photo by Selma

NEW HOSPITALITY SUPPORT

Welcome back Ansie

JENNIFER FOURIE

Old faces who become new faces... a lot of us have been through the cycle of leaving Wilderness, just to be drawn back into the fold again. This time around, we are very happy to say “Welcome back Ansie!”

Many of you will remember Ansie, who worked in the warehouse, playing a support role to the camps. Seven years ago, she left Wilderness to work for Ongava, accepting the challenge of setting up their Procurement role.

She recently accepted the role of Hospitality Support Manager, to take care of the Wilderness Safaris Namibia Training Department.

Ansie went through the departmental induction, where she was given a rundown of each department within Wilderness, as well as meeting the individuals to understand how each cog fits into the wheel.

Travelling will form a big part of Ansie’s role, and she’s already been to the southern camps to meet the teams there, and get an idea of them. Her next trip will be to the Damaraland Camp area, so please keep a look out for Ansie and her team.



NEW SUPPORT: Ansie returns to the Wilderness Family as Hospitality Support

My life for the past 15 months

JORYN BARNARD

I was in the office in Windhoek when the news broke. We are all being sent away to work from home. It was a Monday in March 2020. The last “normal” Monday. I vividly remember greeting my colleagues with high-fives and a “shap - check you in 2 weeks”.

Fast forward two weeks after that fateful Monday to a day mid-week sometime in March 2020. My husband came home to find me absolutely broken. Like – ugly crying. When he asked me what was wrong, I replied “people say this situation is going to continue like this for at least another five months!” My goodness – little did I know 😊

Two weeks became many weeks became many months. As I’m writing this, I realise that I have been working from home for 470 days. Working from home full time. With children. With schools closed for most of 2020 (and things not looking much better for 2021), it means so many of us now get to work from home (full time), while we get the added joys of becoming full-time parents as well as teachers, cleaners and a plethora of other roles that quite frankly, none of us signed up for.

While there are not enough words in the world to describe the past 15 months, I have personally learnt so many lessons. I mean the list is just ENDLESS, but below my personal Top 5.

- Kids can have full-time access to Netflix around the clock and still claim “there is nothing to watch” and that they are bored.
- You CAN burn water. Try leaving a pot on the stove to get the water boiling before you add pasta and then forget the pot and rush to join a ZOOM meeting. Trust me on this one.
- It is a proven fact that the more effort you put into preparing meals for children, the less likely they are to eat it.
- The teacher at school was actually not “the problem”.

- Even though I absolutely LOVE my family with everything I have, I openly admit to not liking them very much over the last 15 months.

During the last 15 months, all of us were pretty much forced to leave our comfort zones. Some people found their peace and Zen in baking endless batches of wholesome, family friendly, organic cupcakes. Others found a passion for health and fitness, and flooded social media with pictures of their running gear (that they had to wear at home ‘cause – lockdown) While I have also embarked on a personal journey during the last 15 months, mine was more a journey of having to learn patience. Patience with my husband. Patience with my kids. And most importantly, patience with myself. I was so used to doing things in my own time and at my own pace.

My life was easy and pretty straightforward. During the day I worked, in the evening, I was a wife and mother. But now, when I open my eyes in the morning, I have to make sure I am ready to tackle the day as a mom, wife, teacher, cook, cleaner, driver, gardener, psychologist, referee and friend (because even if you have two kids – there is still no-one for them to play with). Some days, I get it perfectly right to fulfil all these roles, with my sanity at least half-way intact. On these days, I work the whole day while schooling my kids. No one gets hurt and no one cries. Our home is filled with love and light, and we all fart rainbows. At the end of the day we all sit down to a home-cooked meal before falling into bed happy and content. Other days, the wheels fall off by 09h00, and I have to call my husband and threaten to superglue the kids to the wall if he does not come home RIGHT NOW. We tag out at the gate and I go and sit in a parking lot somewhere to cry. On these days, we eat cereal for dinner and cry ourselves to sleep.

But we always get up again the next day – and try again, with the hope that it will be a better day. Because in the end that is all we have. Hope.



Top left: first camping trip post lockdown 2020 – these kids were over the moon but couldn’t understand why they can’t “chill” in the rooftop tent while we are driving

Bottom left: Beating the lockdown blues with a braai in the rain

Top right: Mom “Just give me 5 freakin minutes” Kids 🙄🙄

Best Meme of 2020



Congratulations! You’ve Made it to August of 2020!

MAKE SOME NOOOOOISE!

All of Us:

