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VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK



AKAGERA NATIONAL PARK

Taking WILDERNESS FURTHER

After more than three decades of building our business across the southern subregion – one that is sustainable without compromising on environmental principles and which, through jobs, training, skills, careers, adjusted horizons and hope, provides a realistic alternative to Africa’s challenges – it was time to move north, to the rainforests and plethora of primates of central Africa.

For many years, we contemplated how our ecotourism model might contribute to the conservation of rainforest ecosystems and iconic endangered species like the mountain gorilla. Rwanda’s Volcanoes National Park and the fauna and flora that survive in the Virunga Massif presented a perfect opportunity.

With the opening of Bisate Lodge, and now Magashi, we hope to achieve conservation, community and culture successes through the operation of a viable tourism business that occupies the topmost niche of the market and thus to further endorse and enhance the brand of Rwanda, as a multiple species and stand-alone responsible tourism destination.




After more than 30 years of driving sustainable ecotourism in southern Africa, we proudly exported our model from the savannah and desert to the rainforest, offering life-changing journeys with Purpose. Photos above 2014-2018.



Rwanda

Situated as it is along the Western, or Albertine Rift, Rwanda is one of Africa's most biodiverse regions. Its undulating mountainous terrain – not for nothing is it known as the “Land of a Thousand Hills” – is a haven of rainforest endemism. The legendary Virunga Mountains – part of the Virunga Massif that covers 8 000 square kilometres across Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda – are home to volcanoes, swathes of rainforest and half the world's total population of Critically Endangered mountain gorillas.

The country's forests are also home to another of Africa's great apes, the chimpanzee, as well as a multitude of primates such as the striking golden monkey, a little-known but magnificent inhabitant of the bamboo forest.



VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK
BISATE

Home of Africa's great apes



Bisate

Bisate Lodge lies in the natural amphitheatre of an extinct volcanic cone – the word *bisate* means 'pieces' in Kinyarwanda, describing how the cone has been worn away by natural erosion. The area has dramatic views of the brooding Bisoke and Karisimbi volcanoes that rear up through the Afro-alpine forests of nearby Volcanoes National Park. Aside from setting a new standard of sustainable luxury, Bisate's partnership with the surrounding community makes it also the most visionary lodge in the country. Its domed guest rooms beautifully reflect the culture of surrounding rural Rwanda, while retaining eco-friendly principles; it is the perfect base for mountain gorilla trekking.


6 forest villas • gorilla trekking • golden monkey trekking
• guided walks • cultural excursions • reforestation programme • Wi-Fi

PREMIER



“Our experience here was truly transformative. You, collectively, are wonderful ambassadors for Rwanda, the gorillas and conservation. You will leave lasting legacies for generations to come with your visions of the future for which we are thankful and grateful.”

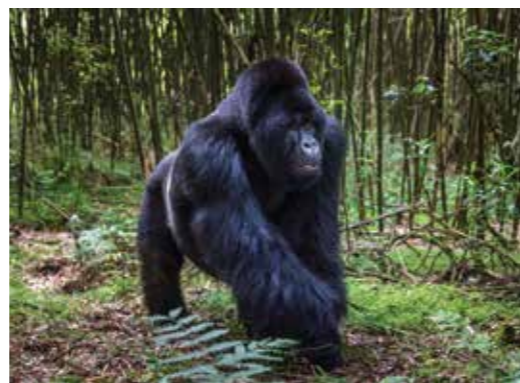


A warm and inviting living room with a high, vaulted ceiling. The walls are a mix of light-colored wood paneling and a large, textured stone fireplace. A fire is burning brightly in the fireplace. To the left, a large window with a black frame offers a view of a mountain range at dusk. The room is furnished with a dark leather sofa, a wooden coffee table, and several wicker chairs with sheepskin throws. A large floor lamp with a wide, dark shade stands on the right. The overall atmosphere is cozy and rustic.

“The contrasts like the striking volcanic vistas and the gentle laughter drifting up from the villages in the evenings, are deeply moving. If you had to exchange your entire bucket list for one thing - this should be it.”







THE GORILLAS OF *Rwanda*

There are two species of gorilla found in Africa: the western gorilla *Gorilla gorilla* and the eastern gorilla *Gorilla beringei*. The eastern gorilla consists of two subspecies, the well-known mountain gorilla *G. b. beringei* of Uganda and Rwanda, and the eastern lowland gorilla *G. b. graueri* of the eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Both of these subspecies are considered Critically Endangered.

The mountain gorilla is the best known of all the subspecies as a result of the work of Dian Fossey and others, but just a thousand animals remain, isolated in the remaining natural islands of the Virunga Massif and Uganda's Bwindi Forest. Here they exist in family groups overseen by massive silverbacks, roaming their home ranges in search of favoured vegetation.





“Bisate and Wilderness’ approach to ecotourism is fabulous. We need people like you to think about the future of wildlife – in other words, the protection of mountain gorillas’ habitat!”





A COMMUNITY *Creation*

One of the challenges facing a tiny country like Rwanda is the heavy population pressure placed on its natural resources. Ecotourism must therefore play a critical role in conserving some of the remaining refuges of central African rainforest biodiversity to which this beautiful country is home.

The purchase of land to create Bisate Lodge is part of this concept. In 2015, some 320 landowners sold their plots (none of which had dwellings on them and all of which were on the steep slopes of the Bisate cone making agriculture difficult) and formed the Tuzamurane Cooperative. This partnership has also begun an indigenous tree nursery for the reforestation of the entire site, which our guests join in with enthusiasm. Since the project's inception, some 20 000 endemic forest tree species have been planted, thus enhancing the biodiversity value of the area.

This is a world-class example of sustainable conservation tourism making a dramatic, positive and far-reaching impact on the unique fauna and flora of a precious, increasingly rare, habitat.







AKAGERA NATIONAL PARK
MAGASHI

Self-sustaining Savannah

Magashi

Magashi is situated in the productive and phenomenally diverse north-eastern corner of Akagera National Park, overlooking scenic Lake Rwanyakazinga. Named after the peninsula on which it stands, the camp looks out over the lake, its architecture and interiors paying homage to traditional Rwandan culture. The wide range of activities mirrors the diversity of habitats: Akagera comprises some of the most scenic savannah in East Africa – open plains, woodlands, lakes, swamp, and grassy low mountains – and is home to one of Africa's highest hippo densities, recently reintroduced eastern black rhino and lion, as well as sitatunga and the bizarre shoebill. Magashi is the only private access area in Akagera.

6 tents • game drives • night drives • boating • guided walks
• catch-and-release fishing • 100% solar power • no Wi-Fi

CLASSIC







ARTISTS IMPRESSION



ARTISTS IMPRESSION





THE STORY OF *Akagera*

Akagera National Park has had trying times since its founding in 1934. A casualty of the Rwandan Civil War and the resultant reduction in its size to accommodate returning refugees, together with rampant poaching all took its toll in the 1990s. The NGO, African Parks, became involved with Akagera in 2010 and Akagera's tourism potential began to evolve, aiding local employment, skills development and buy-in from surrounding communities. Wildlife is once again flourishing, and the Park now boasts a healthy population of lion which were introduced in 2015 after a 20-year absence; black rhino were reintroduced in 2017.

In 2018, Wilderness Safaris entered into a partnership with Africa Parks and the Rwandan Development Board. Our aim is to support the wildlife in the northern area of Akagera focusing on targeted aerial surveys for the rare shoebill, sitatunga and the black rhino. By operating Magashi we will help to make Akagera financially self-sustaining for the first time in its history.





CHILDREN IN THE *Wilderness*

When Wilderness Safaris began working with the people that live near Bisate, it was obvious that its non-profit partner, Children in the Wilderness, would soon follow. Children in the Wilderness Rwanda duly launched its innovative Eco-Club programme, hosting its first Eco-Mentor training session at Bisate Lodge in March 2018. Both Bisate Primary School teachers and Wilderness Safaris staff have volunteered their time as Eco-Mentors, and have committed themselves to running the Eco-Club Programme in the school. Eco-Clubs are held once a week, where our Eco-Mentors teach lessons from our Eco-Club Resource Book.

By working hand in hand with the team from Bisate Lodge, we aim to develop and groom our Eco-Club members to be leaders in sustainable conservation from the ground up. By introducing our Eco-Club programme at Bisate Primary School, we hope to provide the participants with a structured environmental programme that will give them the chance to learn more about the environment and expand their knowledge on various conservation and environmental issues.





CHILDREN IN THE WILDERNESS

CHILDREN IN THE WILDERNESS

OUR People

People are at the heart of Wilderness Safaris. Our staff is made up of individuals who share the beliefs and values of our organisation and who together form the extended Wilderness family. These warm, inspiring and enthusiastic individuals are the vital link and interface between our guests, our partners and the wilderness; their knowledge and passion gives a new meaning to service.

From the offices to the far-flung camps and Explorations across the length and breadth of Africa, our people – approximately 2 300 of them – are the custodians of what we call the Wilderness Way, which means to have a humble pride in the bigger vision of the organisation and the difference we seek to make. They convey their enthusiasm to our guests and by sharing what they have learned, encourage them to learn about ecological and conservation principles.







Kigali

Rwanda's geographic and vibrant heart is the modern city of Kigali. As well as the nation's capital, it is the country's most important business centre and main port of entry. An evocative and unmissable Kigali experience is a visit to the Genocide Memorial. Honouring the more than one million victims of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, the memorial is the final resting place for the remains of some 250 000 victims.





THOUSAND HILLS
Africa

Thousand Hills Africa is a bespoke luxury travel and concierge service based in Kigali, Rwanda, partnering with Wilderness Safaris to provide all manner of services to our guests in Rwanda. It is at the forefront of a thriving ecotourism industry in Rwanda and is completely committed to a sustainable ecotourism model. The intimate knowledge of its highly-qualified team, with its profound and infectious love for the country, ensures an unforgettable stay for every visitor.

Planning a safari

IN RWANDA

While the primary emphasis of a visit to Rwanda is on the great apes, primarily the mountain gorilla, there is a tremendous amount to see and experience in this small yet vibrant country. Its small size means that travel is not arduous and places are easily accessible. Aside from its natural wonders – for example the savannahs of Akagera National Park, Lake Kivu and Nyungwe Forest, a visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial is a 'must do'. Overall however it is often the sense of undisturbed wilderness and pristine functioning ecosystems that has the most significant impact on visitors.

Very few people have a month to spare for a safari though, so planning what to see and do in your available time is critical. We strongly recommend working with an African travel specialist in your home country in order to get the best advice. We work with a number of excellent tour operators and travel agents who know our camps and services intimately and will design the perfect safari especially for you.

When considering how to ensure the best experience from your safari, in our view the most important aspects to consider are diversity and logistics. How will you see as much variety as possible, while still having time to relax, reflect and enjoy your time? It is for this reason that we attempt to provide as seamless a journey as possible ... operating our own meet and greet services, an airport lounge, a touring and transfer business and our own 'bush airline' that flies you from camp to camp.

We want a journey with us to change your life, and to change the way you see the world and your place in it.



CAMPS

1. Volcanoes National Park: Bisate
2. Akagera National Park: Magashi





YOUR JOURNEY WILL *Make a Difference*

Experiences with wildlife, being in truly remote locations and interacting with our staff are the primary reasons why our guests choose to travel with Wilderness. But more than this; when you journey with us, you are helping make a difference – to Africa, its people and its wildlife.

A portion of every bednight that you book with us is dedicated to conservation. A small percentage goes to the Wilderness Wildlife Trust, our non-profit entity that supports a wide variety of projects throughout Africa: from research and conservation to wildlife management and educational bursaries.

Another share is portioned off to be used throughout the organisation in protecting and nurturing these wild places, in uplifting the communities that live adjacent to these, and in ensuring that our camps step with as light a footprint as possible on the Earth. Our pride and joy is our Children in the Wilderness programme, which aims to educate the youth of Africa, inspiring and helping them to appreciate and thus protect their magnificent natural heritage.

We invite you to join us on a journey that makes a difference.



www.wildernesstrust.com



www.childreninthewilderness.com



ELSEWHERE IN
Africa

BOTSWANA Abu / Chitabe / Chitabe Lediba / DumaTau / Jacana / Jao / Kalahari Plains / King's Pool / Kwetsani / Linyanti Tented Camp / Little Mombo / Little Tubu / Little Vumbura / Mombo / Qorokwe / Savuti / Seba / Tubu Tree / VumburaPlains / Xigera

KENYA Segera

NAMIBIA Little Kulala / Kulala Desert Lodge / Damaraland Camp / Desert Rhino / Doro Nawas / Hoanib Skeleton Coast / Serra Cafema

SEYCHELLES North Island

SOUTH AFRICA Private Journeys, Cape Town

ZAMBIA Busanga Bush Camp / Shumba / Toka Leya

ZIMBABWE Davison's / Little Makalolo / Linkwasha / Ruckomechi / Little Ruckomechi / Chikwenya / Zambezi Touring, Victoria Falls



BOTSWANA



KENYA



NAMIBIA



SEYCHELLES



ZAMBIA



ZIMBABWE



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Please note that all of our activities may be subject to availability of guides or vehicles and are weather dependent. Some activities are seasonal and some at extra cost.

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