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15 December 2021

NEWSFLASH

Vumbura Plains Refurb

Commencing January 2022, we are delighted to advise that the iconic Vumbura Plains in Botswana will be undergoing an extensive refurbishment in the first part of the New Year! Re-opening in April, we look forward to sharing further details of this exciting project with you in the coming months.

Toka Leya Refurb

We are seeing a continued increase in bookings for both 2022 and 2023, which bodes well for a return to normal operations and renewed investment in our camps. Accordingly, we are closing Toka Leya for the month of January to carry out a softs, fittings and furniture refurb.

Wilderness 2022 & 2023 Rates

Taking the situation at the time into account, our 2021 rates were extended into 2022, with the exception of the Botswana camps where 2% was added to cover the VAT increase. However, given recent developments across the globe and a far more positive outlook on the travel front, we have reviewed the situation and will now be instituting a 5% inflationary increase on our 2022 rates for all Wilderness services. The scope includes all Wilderness camps, Wilderness Air, touring & transfers with Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe and Wilderness Safaris Private Journeys, as well as all the Governors' services in East Africa.

- Effective Monday 20 December 2021, these revised rates will apply to all new bookings placed from that date onwards.
- Rates already quoted by Friday 17 December 2021 for confirmed/provisional bookings travelling in 2022 will be honoured.
- Updated 2022 Rates Sheets will also be available on the Info Centre from by the middle of next week.

The one exception to the above is Magashi Camp in Rwanda, where we are levying a higher increase. This is due to a growing demand, largely driven by guests combining Magashi in itineraries with the likes of Bisate, Singita Kwitonda, One & Only and Sabinyo. This has also been driven by an increase in park fees in Akagera National Park. As a result, this increase will be reflected in rates for the remainder of the 2021 season as well – from 20 December 2021 to 28 February 2022.

Our 2023 rates are now live in the system, with the rates sheets scheduled to follow in due course.

- If you were quoted for 2023 before rates were available, your Travel Designer will re-price arrangements accordingly. If the new cost is higher than the original quote, we will honour the previous price. If the new cost is lower than the original quote, we will gladly confirm this revised rate.
- We do not have finalised touring and transfer rates as yet, so rates for these services are subject to change.

Rwanda Quarantine & Additional Testing

Announced 14 December 2021, all passengers arriving in Rwanda must quarantine for 3 days at a designated hotel at their own cost. In addition to the negative COVID-19 PCR test taken 72 hours prior to arrival required for entry, and the second test on arrival, a further two tests, taken on day 3 and on day 7 from the arrival date, must now be taken at own cost at a designated testing site. This is effective from tomorrow, 16 December 2021, for a period of one month.

However, we understand discussions are under way for tourists to be exempt from this requirement. Your Travel Designer will inform you as soon as we know more.

Namibia Test Validity Change

Effective from midnight on 16 December 2021 and in place until 15 January 2022, subject to review:

- The validity of RT-PCR COVID-19 test results for entry is reduced to 72 hours (instead of 7 days) from time of the collection of the specimen to the time the individual arrives in Namibia.
- Random COVID-19 RT-PCR testing will be conducted on persons permitted entry into Namibia at Points of Entry.

Vaccination Status & FAQ Document

Great news! Wilderness has been on the frontline in driving vaccination and educational programmes throughout our organisation, and we now have over 90% of our Group (including Governors') vaccinated! The COVID-19 FAQ document has been updated accordingly, with a particular focus on the questions related to vaccinations.

REMINDERS

Festive Season Public Holidays/Travel Shop Office Closures

Our Wilderness Safaris Emergency After-Hours Service will provide assistance with emergencies over this period. Mobile/cell: +27 82 576 9173 | Email: WSAfterHours@wilderness.co.za. The Wilderness Window may be accessed for availability, quotes, bookings or information as required.

South Africa, Botswana, Kenya (Governors'), Namibia, Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe:

- Friday 24 December – from 13:00 for Christmas Eve
- Monday 27 December – Due to the Day of Goodwill (26 December - Boxing Day) falling on a Sunday
- Friday 31 December – from 13:00 for New Year's Eve

South Africa only: Thursday 16 December – Day of Reconciliation

Botswana & Rwanda only: Monday 3 January 2022 – Due to New Year's Day falling on a Sunday

Search Functionality on the Info Centre/Wilderness Window

Making it easier to find the document you are looking for, remember there is a SEARCH function under WS Product Information at the top of the page – type what you are looking for in the block next to Name (left hand side of screen), hit Search (right hand side of screen), the relevant document/s will come up – double-click to download.

CAMPS & ACTIVITIES

In-camp testing in Namibia will now be Seasonal

We will no longer offer in-camp testing at our Namibian camps over the summer/rainy season. Weather conditions are having an impact on arrangements with aircraft being unable to take off or land, incurring higher costs and delays. This will therefore be a seasonal offering going forward. Existing, confirmed bookings will be honoured but no new bookings will be taken for the period 20 December 2021 to 30 April 2022. Should testing still be required next year (and we hope it won't), the operational season will be from 1 May to 31 October 2022. From 1 November 2022, we will not be offering in-camp testing for these same reasons.

Please be aware that even for the confirmed bookings that we honour, per our standard terms and conditions of operation, neither Wilderness Air nor Wilderness Safaris can take responsibility if we cannot fly the samples back to Windhoek timeously, resulting in a delay in test results.

All quotes, provisional bookings or new requests for COVID-19 testing during the period 20 December and 30 April 2022, must be amended to allow for testing in Windhoek prior to departure (or at those properties outside of town that offer testing). In most cases, one overnight is sufficient, however this will depend on regional/international flights and what time the guests arrive back in Windhoek.

Note too that the charter rates have increased quite a bit for 2022 as we have outsourced. Thus far, we have really only seen large groups making use of the service and some bookings in the southern camps, but for smaller parties, it is easier (and often cheaper) to night-stop in Windhoek. All quotes, provisional bookings or bookings that move to next year because of COVID-related or other postponement, will be re-priced accordingly.

Water Level & Activity Update for Botswana

- The Linyanti – water levels are still good for boating at Dumatau. Sightings have been good with lions, leopards and general game. With the recent rains we have received, there is a lot of water in the concession and the large herds of elephants have broken up into smaller breeding herds.
- Vumbura – water levels are getting low and thus far, haven't received enough rain to make a noticeable difference. However, we are still able to do water activities - both mokoro excursions and boat cruises. Game sightings have been great over the past month. Lion, leopard and wild dog have been seen often. Herds of buffalos, elephant as well as other general game have been seen around the concession.
- Qorokwe – there is still enough water to go out on mekoro, although there hasn't been much rain yet. Good sightings of lion, cheetah and wild dog at the moment.
- Abu Private Reserve – the water has subsided and we are no longer able to do boats or Mokoro. The focus has been on drives and walks with good wildlife in the area.
- Jao Concession – some rain has fallen, so the mokoro activity is still on offer but there is no boating. Game drives mostly take place on Hunda Island, and there have been sightings of lion, leopard and general game.

WILDERNESS AIR

New Landing Fee for Sanctuary Camps

Falling under Area 2 in our Botswana circuit, be advised that a landing fee will apply from 1 January 2022 for the use of Pijao Airstrip for Chief's Camp and Stanleys for Baines' and Stanley's camps. Rates, quotes and bookings will be adjusted accordingly.

TOURING & TRANSFERS

Cape Recommendations

Wilderness Safaris Private Journeys (WSPJ) have updated their recommended restaurant list for the Western Cape. It is available on the Info Centre, along with other documents providing information about Family Activities, Art Galleries, Gardens, Spas, etc.

COVID-19 UPDATES

BOTSWANA

- Over and above the standard negative test for entry, an announcement was made that proof of vaccination is now required for entry into Botswana: *(e) to enhance our protection at ports of entry, we will without fail ensure strict enforcement of the 72-hour negative PCR policy. Furthermore, a valid vaccine certificate will be required on arrival.*
- Clarity is still needed for those who legitimately cannot get the vaccine (i.e. age, medical reasons) as well as when this will take effect. In the interim, our recommendation is to travel with proof of vaccination.

KENYA

The below entry requirements apply to all passengers travelling to Kenya from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe:

- All arriving passengers aged 18 years and over, must be fully vaccinated and be in possession of a valid COVID-19 vaccination certificate.
- All arriving passengers must have a negative PCR COVID-19 test carried out within 72 hours before arrival in Kenya, taken in South Africa only.
- All arriving passengers will be subjected to a Rapid Test on arrival, free of charge. Results are available approximately 15 minutes after sample collection.

Effective 21 December 2021, ALL arriving passengers aged 18 years and over, must be fully vaccinated and be in possession of a valid COVID-19 vaccination certificate. This is a government requirement for entry to Kenya as well as to access various services and areas in Kenya, including hospitality establishments, National Parks, Reserves and Conservancies.

CORRECTION TO LAST MONTH'S UPDATE: Kenya does not require COVID-19 testing before departure. However, all travellers departing Kenya must ensure they know and abide by the COVID-19 testing requirements of the airline, at the destination and/or transit points.

NAMIBIA

- The transition period for the implementation of the Trusted Travel System has been extended from 01 December 2021 to 15 January 2022. After 15 January 2022, only COVID-19 certificates obtained on the TTS or verified on the Global Haven systems will be valid for exit from or entry into Namibia.
- Entry with a de-isolation certificate applies to returning Namibian residents only. All visitors to Namibia still have to provide a negative COVID-19 test result, not older than 72 hours, calculated from the date the sample for testing was taken.

MAURITIUS

- The Republic of Mauritius has suspended all flights from South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Namibia and Eswatini until Friday 31 December 2021.
- From elsewhere, Mauritius remains an open destination and will continue to welcome visitors, in compliance with health protocols currently in place with borders open to vaccinated foreign visitors.

SEYCHELLES

- Visitors who have been in one of these countries in the preceding 14 days will not be permitted entry – Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.
- Entry from all other countries is allowed, as long as travellers meet these requirements:
 - Have a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR certificate, obtained less than 72 hours prior to travel.
 - Apply for Health Travel Authorization (travizory) via <https://seychelles.govtas.com> prior to travel, once RT-PCR test results are received. The application costs Euro 10.00 per person.
 - Carry valid Travel and Health insurance to cover COVID-19 related quarantine, isolation or treatment.
 - Entry conditions will not be affected by your COVID-19 Vaccination status; but visitors are strongly encouraged to be fully immunized before travel.
 - Seychelles does not require PCR test on departure. However, your airline or final destination may require one.

SOUTH AFRICA

- At this time the current regulations under Level 1 remain in place. Another briefing is pending (no date advised) and we will advise if the situation changes.
- Next Pathology have advised that for the 12-hour turnaround test conducted at ORT, swabs must be taken before noon as the lab processing those tests closes at 17:00.
- A health screening questionnaire must be completed just prior to travel, or en route, to hand over on arrival in South Africa. Please contact your Travel Designer for a copy of the form or find it on the Info Centre.

TANZANIA & ZANZIBAR

- All travellers entering Tanzania and Zanzibar require a negative RT-PCR test result not older than 96 hours prior to travel. Children age 5 and below do not require the negative RT-PCR test result, and are exempt from rapid testing.
- All arriving travellers must complete the Traveller's Health Surveillance form within 24 hours prior to arrival:
 - Tanzania - <https://afyamsafiri.moh.go.tz/>
 - Zanzibar - <https://healthtravelznz.mohz.go.tz>.
- All travellers arriving from "high risk" countries will be subjected to a rapid test on arrival at a cost of \$10 per person on the mainland, or \$25 per person on Zanzibar. This currently applies to: The Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, France, India, Malawi, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America, Rwanda and South Africa. Travellers should pre-pay for their rapid tests in order to avoid airport delays on arrival. For mainland arrivals, this can be done when completing the Traveller Health Surveillance form. For Zanzibar arrivals, this can be done via: <https://zanzibarcovidtesting.co.tz>
- A traveller exiting Tanzania will be tested for COVID-19 only if the airline requires it or the country of origin/ next destination requires it.

ZAMBIA

- All travellers entering Zambia must produce a printed negative RT-PCR test obtained within 72 hours prior to arrival in Zambia, PLUS proof of vaccination. Without these, tourists will not be allowed entry into the country.
- There was mention of mandatory quarantine previously but this is no longer required.

ZIMBABWE

- A Statutory Instrument (SI) regarding revised regulations has been published, stipulating that there is a ten-day mandatory quarantine for travellers arriving in Zimbabwe, even with a negative RT-PCR certificate. Also additional testing on arrival at the airport.
 - Thus far, no guests have been quarantined nor additional tests conducted. However, that situation may change at any time, depending on when the necessary resources are in place.
 - At this time, no further details have been made available regarding costs of tests on arrival or where quarantine will be, etc.
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