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24 February 2021

## NEWSFLASH

### Revitalised DumaTau

We are thrilled to advise that the new DumaTau will be opening 2 April 2021! More will follow in the coming weeks, but the Camp Information Sheet is available on the Info Centre should you require specifics now.

### 2022 Rates – Now Live

We are pleased to announce that our 2022 rates are now live. In spite of escalating costs in our areas of operation, we have taken the decision to not increase our rates for 2022. Bookings that were already in the system for travel in 2022 will be re-costed in line with these rates and quotes revised accordingly. The published rates sheets will be available on the Info Centre in the Wilderness Window from 1 March 2021.

### Botswana VAT Increase

In a move to broaden the domestic revenue base, the Botswana government has announced that as from 1 April 2021, it will increase the value added tax (VAT) rate from 12% to 14%. Applicable to both Wilderness Safaris camps and Wilderness Air, we will therefore be increasing our Botswana rates by 2% from 1 April 2021. Quotes and bookings will be addressed as follows:

- New enquiries for travel after 1 April 2021 will be quoted at the revised rate.
- Where quotes are in the system for travel after 1 April 2021, these will be revised to include the 2% VAT increase.
- Where bookings for future travel have been paid in full by 31 March 2021, Wilderness Safaris will absorb the 2% VAT increase on our side.
- Where a deposit has been paid for a booking scheduled to travel after 1 April 2021, the additional 2% VAT will be added to the balance invoice. This includes bookings from 2020 that were postponed to 2021.

### Free Flying - Available in 2022

We are pleased to announce that we have extended our Free Flying deal. This can be applied to bookings traveling before 31 December 2022 and there is no “bookings made by” date applicable:

- Book a minimum of 6 nights at our Wilderness Safaris Botswana, Livingstone and/or Hwange camps, and the first 3 qualifying legs (air and/or road as specified previously) are free.
- Book a minimum of 8 nights or more at our Wilderness Safaris Botswana, Livingstone and/or Hwange camps, and the first 4 qualifying legs (air and/or road as specified previously) are free.

## Extended Flexible Terms

### POSTPONEMENT OF EXISTING BOOKINGS

- Existing bookings scheduled to travel in March, April and May 2021 may be postponed to travel any time until 31 May 2022, at no additional cost.
- A reminder that all bookings must have the required non-refundable deposits paid in order to be postponed.

### NEW BOOKINGS

- New bookings – made between today and 31 March 2021 for travel before 31 March 2022 – will be required to pay a 20% deposit to hold and confirm space, subject to upward adjustment if required by third party suppliers.
- This deposit will be fully refundable up to 45 days prior to travel for all Wilderness Safaris services, provided that travel is not possible, or it is reasonably foreseeable that travel restrictions will still be in place on the date of travel. For services booked for third party suppliers, the relevant cancellation penalties will apply\*.

\*Please note that our traditional Accreditation Agreement still remains in effect, but that the changes above will be deemed to be incorporated therein. Wilderness Safaris reserves the right to change, amend, or retract any of these terms and conditions from time to time, as it deems fit.

### Wilderness Safaris Online Image Library – Domain Change

Please note there is a domain change for the Wilderness Safaris online image library. Kindly bookmark [wilderness-images.com](http://wilderness-images.com) for future access. Do note:

- Your login details are unchanged.
- Use your F5 key (or Ctrl + F5) to clear your system cache; this is helpful if the system hangs. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

## CAMPS & ACTIVITIES

### Botswana Water Levels

Botswana is currently experiencing a particularly wet season - a real boost to rivers, pans, lagoons, vegetation and the water table. However, while 850 mm has been recorded thus far in the Vumbura concession, and over 1000 mm has been recorded around Maun, the catchment area in Angola has not had the same volumes. Some rains may still fall, but we are expecting an average inundation (flood) this year. We will keep you updated in this regard.

### Windhoek Airport Lounge plus Meet & Assist Service

Our lounge facility at Hosea Kutako International Airport (HKIA) is currently unavailable while the airport undergoes a rebuild and expansion. Refitted/furnished for our needs once we are able to do so, the new lounge facility will also be in a different location.

In addition, due to low volumes of travellers at this time, we do not have someone stationed permanently at the airport. We hope to resume operations on 1 April 2021 but will keep you updated should this change.

Accordingly, we are unable to offer a welcome service (basic meet & greet), luggage storage/re-packing, access to Wi-Fi and the other elements that formed part of the lounge experience.

However, our Meet & Assist service with a full briefing (see page 21 of the published Namibia Rates Sheet for details and rates), is still available. Booked and charged for accordingly (in advance), a Wilderness Safaris staff member will go out to HKIA to meet guests. As part of this service, it is possible for luggage to be stored at our offices in Windhoek and returned to guests on departure. At Swakopmund and Walvis Bay Airports, we do not offer a welcome/M&A service so guests will generally be met/assisted by the pilot of the charter company with whom they are flying – whether Wilderness Air or another operator.

- If the Meet & Assist service is not booked then please note the following when arriving or departing from HKIA:
  - Guests will either be met by their pilot or representative of the charter company and assisted accordingly, or must make their own way to the relevant car hire desk/check-in counter for flights.
  - We are unable to assist with luggage storage or repacking bags over this period, and HKIA does not offer any storage facility either. **It is therefore vital that all guests with light aircraft transfer arrangements adhere to the required weight and dimension for their luggage.** Should guests be unable to adhere to these regulations, return airport transfers will need to be booked and charged for so that luggage may be stored at our office in Windhoek.

## WILDERNESS AIR

### Change to Wilderness Air Botswana flying until 31 March 2021

The recent global increase in COVID-19 cases and consequent stricter travel regulations, plus less commercial air options for access, has seen a drop in guest numbers. We need to manage our flying business in tangent with what is happening on the ground, so options will be limited in the coming months. At this time, the following will be in place until 31 March 2021:

- Kasane as an entry/exit point is not available for bookings on seat rates until 1 April 2021. Flights between A2/A3 and Kasane between now and 31 March 2021 will need to be on a sole use charter basis. This is applicable to bookings at both Wilderness Safaris and third party camps.
- Flights on the Zambezi Triangle between Livingstone/Victoria Falls and Kasane or vice versa on our circuit and seat rates, will not be available. Sole use charters will need to be utilised instead, or road transfers booked with Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe.
- All bookings on seat rates over this period should enter/exit through Maun, as the circuit continues to operate as normal between Maun and Mombo, or any other Wilderness Safaris camp operating over this period, as well as the usual third parties that we access on the circuit.

The good news for when normal operations resume is that the rates for the A2/Kasane and A3/Kasane sectors, and vice versa, have reduced.

### Important Information pertaining to our Flight Circuits

Please be aware that when the need arises, Wilderness Air reserve the right to sub-charter to an authorised, third party, preferred aircraft operator.

### REMINDER | Certain Restrictions for Wilderness Safaris Botswana Airstrips

Access to the Mombo, Jao and Abu airstrips is restricted to Wilderness Air only. The location of the airstrips is so close to the camps (the premier camps in particular) that the constant noise of air traffic negatively impacts our guests' wilderness experience – precisely the reason they seek to be in these wild places. Wilderness Air ensures there are optimum passenger numbers on their aircraft and operate flights during a set flying window between 11:00 – 16:00, which in turn allows our guests to enjoy as much peace and quiet as possible – both in camp and on activities. Note that this ruling applies to Botswana charter operators only – it is not applicable to private or sole use charters booked with foreign operators.

## TOURING & TRANSFERS

### Wilderness Safaris Private Journeys – Cape

Our Private Journeys preferred partner and rack rates are now available in the Info Centre on the Wilderness Window, found under the Wilderness Safaris/Wilderness Product Information/Private Journeys (CPT). Additional information includes a Tour Service Summary and brief overview of our Signature Journeys as well as individual tour descriptions and tour components, along with some “recommended lists”.

### Lower Rates for Touring & Transfers in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana

In response to the current climate, our touring and transfer division have reduced a number of rates for their services in Victoria Falls, Livingstone, Chobe, etc. Effective 1 April 2021, and applicable to all new bookings made from today, some of the options that have dropped in rate are: transfers, tours of the Falls, river cruises, Upper Zambezi canoeing, the shorter helicopter flight, Chobe Day Trip.

## COVID-19 UPDATES

### COVID-19 Protocols, Entry Requirements & Travel Regulations

Please refer to the COVID-19 section on the Info Centre for the latest versions of our country specific COVID-19 protocol documents. They are quite comprehensive and should address most queries you receive, particularly in relation to entry requirements and testing options. Some of the key changes are:

- Botswana: Rapid (antigen) testing at no charge has been implemented at all ports of entry. So in addition to the mandatory negative RT-PCR test taken within 72 hours of arrival, all travellers will now be subject to a COVID-19 rapid test on entry. At Maun Airport, it takes about 20 minutes to complete the paperwork, then the test is taken and you wait about 15 minutes for the results.
- Kenya: All travellers arriving into Kenya MUST have an approved e-visa in hand. Visas are no longer available on arrival. Visas can be arranged/purchased on <http://evisa.go.ke/evisa.html>.
- Rwanda: The entry requirement is a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR test now taken within 72 hours of arrival – no longer 120 hours.

### Q&A re: Medical Evacuation if a guest tests positive

- Who is flying people out if they are tested positive and need to go to hospital? *All medical evacuation services are operating as normal and are evacuating COVID-19 positive patients.*
- What hospital would be used? *Refer to the COVID-19 Protocol documents. Some countries have good facilities and guests will remain in-country, while others may be moved by air ambulance to an appropriate private hospital. First prize is Johannesburg, but it may be elsewhere. During COVID-19 peaks there have been issues with hospital bed availability.*
- Who covers the medical evacuation costs to South Africa or elsewhere? *As with any evacuation, the costs are for the guests' account, which is why they should be carrying travel insurance which covers COVID-19 related expenses.*

### Quarantine Facilities

A variety of options are available in the regions within which we operate – ranging from staying at the property to designated hotels, apartments, private houses and government facilities. The specifics are subject to change and at the discretion of government and health authorities. Each case is addressed on its' own merit and facilitated via our Wilderness24 service. It is vital that all travellers have comprehensive travel insurance to cover the relevant costs of accommodation, food, etc. should they need to extend their stay by 10 to 14 days – whatever the requirements are.

### Wilderness Safaris SOP Document

We have added our Wilderness Safaris Public Standard Operating Procedures document (SOP) to the Info Centre. Covering all aspects of our business – camps, aviation and transport - this detailed document provides the specifics of how we are currently operating and will operate in future in a COVID-19 environment. Wilderness Safaris has collaborated extensively with both local tourism boards as well as industry peers to ensure we create a standard appropriate to our niche safari industry. As it stipulates, the SOP is a living document and will change according to Government and health guideline changes in the coming months.

### Botswana Airport Surcharge

Maun Airport has returned to normal operational hours. The weekend surcharge no longer applies to arrangements in and out of Maun. However, the surcharge does remain in place for flights to and from Kasane at the weekend.

### Testing in Botswana

Rapid tests are conducted on arrival as a double check when entering the Botswana. They are not being done on departure, however, a valid negative RT-PCR test is required by the airlines/onward destinations when departing from Botswana. There are 3 testing options available to all guests that book through Wilderness Safaris as a DMC which are listed in brief below. This service is available at both Wilderness Safaris camps and third parties. Please contact your Journey Specialist for further details or refer to the Botswana COVID-19 Protocol document.

- Option 1 – a helicopter option, where medical personnel fly into camp and guests are tested in their rooms.
- Option 2 – a fixed wing option where medical personnel fly to the camp airstrip. Guests are transferred by road to/from the airstrip and are tested there. This is a little cheaper than the helicopter.
- Option 3 – in-town testing where we can assist with arrangements. All costs for the necessary accommodation and transport, plus test, are for the guests' account.

Note: In-camp testing is not possible at Kalahari Plains so it is preferable to not have it as the last camp on the itinerary, or you will need to include two nights in Maun at the end if it is.

## REMINDERS

### **Gorilla Permit Deal in Rwanda**

There is a 30% discount (USD 1050 vs the normal rate of USD 1500) on gorilla permits if visiting other Rwanda national parks (Akagera National Park or Nyungwe National Park) for 3 days (2 nights) or more during the low season between 1 November and 31 May, with no block-out period over the festive season.

For African citizens, a rate of USD 500 per gorilla permit is available until 31 May 2021.

### **The Info Centre on the Wilderness Window**

We are in the process of making some adjustments to the Info Centre layout to assist with finding information. You may see further changes going forward but as a guideline this is what we have so far:

- Detailed Supplier Information – covers both Associated Product (AP) and Wilderness Safaris (WS).
  - Rates Manuals – Both WS and AP Rates Sheets can be found here.
  - General Information – Relates to the AP offering...brochures, maps, travel advice documents for non-Wilderness regions, etc.
  - Wilderness Safaris – all information relating to Wilderness Safaris and our product offering, including travel in a time of COVID, videos, webinars, copies of our latest newsletters, product updates, etc. Another useful tool is the General Information Manual (GIM) – which is a consolidation of all details related to Wilderness Safaris operations and company policies. It is an extensive document, however it also easy to navigate if you make use of the contents page and search functions.
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