

PT picks: Best safari lodges in South Africa

Premier Traveler's September Issue Continues to Receive Roaring Reviews

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, USA, October 21, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- NEW YORK, New York - If you haven't taken that adventure trip of a lifetime, this may change your mind. Whether you're wild about South Africa or are just now heeding the call, Adam Rodriguez and Jake Porter can't get enough. The country's luxury safaris offer animal enthusiasts a chance to view big game while enjoying all the creature comforts available at some of the most exclusive properties.

Royal Malewane/Africa House

The incredible staff, the most qualified rangers and over-the-top accommodations assure that every visitor's stay will be perfect. There are never more than 20 guests checked into the 6 suites and 2 private suites (each sleep 4) where monkeys, antelopes and elephants come right up to the rooms. Unwind between the 2 daily game drives with a visit to the spa, a cool

dip in the lap pool, a workout in the gym, or a browse through the library and curio shop. A dining area and lounge overlook the waterhole for mealtime wildlife viewing.

Just a few minutes' drive from the main lodge; Africa House can accommodate families and groups of up to 12. The 6-bed, 6-bath luxury hideaway comes complete with a private chef/butler/ranger and its own wine cellar. Guests can mingle with others at the main lodge or maintain privacy during their visit. In addition, everything from helicopter flights and hot air balloon rides to horseback riding and a canyon cruise can be arranged.

Tintswalo Safari Lodge

The extremely attentive staff makes guests feel welcome and at home at this 5-star safari lodge, located on the Manyeleti Private Game Reserve, which shares unfenced borders with Kruger National Park. Our knowledgeable ranger cooked breakfast in the bush with a portable grill, complete with champagne. When we weren't on amazing game drives or bush walks, we relaxed on our deck or in the plunge pool, viewing wildlife at the waterhole beyond. The main lodge contains a library of rare books, a wine cellar, formal dining area and spa.

Londolozzi

When it comes to luxury safaris in South Africa, Londolozzi, on the Sabi Sand private game reserve



often comes to mind. One of the finest gaming lodges in the country and the first to be granted Relais & Chateau status, Londolozi accords guests top notch cuisine and the very best in game viewing. Though elephant, buffalo, rhino and lion are plentiful here, leopards take center stage. In between game drives we were wonderfully ensconced in the Pioneer Camp, newly renovated in 2010 and one of 5 lodges on property. Three private suites with Victorian bathrooms can be linked by glass sky walkways. Service is exemplary: We only had to mention a craving in passing and the attentive staff managed to surprise us at every turn.

Singita/Lebombo

One of 12 lodges and camps in the Singita collection, Lebombo Lodge is situated on Singita's private concession in Kruger National Park, near South Africa's border with Mozambique. Fifteen contemporary loft-style suites overlook the N'wanetsi River. When not on game drives we enjoyed nightly wine tastings selected by an incredible sommelier from an expansive collection. A swimming pool, spa and gym, large boutique and gallery keep guests occupied on property. Activities include guided safari walks, mountain biking, stargazing safaris, archery, and a visit to the Singita School of Cooking.

Ulusaba

Owned by Sir Richard Branson in the Sabi Sand Reserve, Mpumalanga province of South Africa, Ulusaba has 3 lodges: Rock Lodge has the best view in the Sabi Sand and within Rock Lodge is Cliff Lodge, which is a luxuriously private 2 bedroom suite. Both lodges are recommended for families. Located 500 meters away is the Safari Lodge, which is built along the banks of the dry Mabrak riverbed. Guests will sense adventure as they cross the swing bridges between the tree house rooms. Ulusaba allows you to experience culture and a superb safari experience.

Camp Jabulani

This Relais & Chateau property is known for its herd of trained elephants that were rescued by the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre. Guests can visit the center and experience the animals on daily elephant-back safaris; the only nighttime elephant-back safari in the world. When not interacting with elephants and viewing other species including lion, leopard, rhinoceros, giraffe and impala, guests can unwind in the open-air spa or fitness area, on the expansive wooden deck or in the lounge, or retreat to the privacy of a plunge pool. Camp Jabulani has 6 luxury suites for up to 12 guests.

Lion Sands Ivory Lodge

This is the oldest of South Africa's private reserves and the origin of wildlife tourism in South Africa. Located in a private concession within Kruger National Park, here safaris can venture off main roads so guests can see wildlife in its natural habitat for extended periods. We stayed at the Ivory Lodge, in one of 6 luxury suites with a courtyard leading to the living room. With a rim flow pool, wooden deck and private lounge, each suite overlooks the banks of the Sabie River. For a truly unique experience, spend a night in a tree house perched high above the ground, enjoying a picnic dinner and sleeping beneath the stars.

Tswalu Private Game Reserve

At Tswalu Kalahari, South Africa's biggest private game reserve, guests experience a unique environment in the southern Kalahari combining the rolling savannah landscape with the Korranaberg Mountains. Here black-maned lions, black rhino, giraffe and cheetah can be seen, along with rare

pangolin, armadillo and African dogs; even a habituated meerkat colony. When not viewing the wildlife, guests can enjoy boma feasts, bush dinners, wine tastings, champagne breakfasts and dune picnics. Suites in The Motse or Tarkuni afford the ultimate in luxury, and guests can spend at least one night sleeping beneath the stars on the Malori Sleep-Out Deck. The Tswalu Spa and spa garden provide a unique place for pampering indulgence.

Madikwe Kopano Safari Lodge

The Madikwe Game Reserve is one of the largest in South Africa, located along the Botswana border. The reserve is perfect for families or large groups, with 3 distinct lodges: The Lelapa, Dithaba and Kopano Lodge that has 4 suites with private plunge pools and a common area. Guests can enjoy twice daily game drives, bush walks, astronomy, wildlife lectures, bush breakfasts, dinners and picnic lunches. Children's activities are also available. Our surprise lunch in the bush came complete with chefs and a bar. Six people cooking and serving the 2 of us in the middle of nowhere was the ultimate in luxury!

Sabi Earth Lodge

The Big Five, cheetah, wild dog and 200 other animal species call this part of Kruger National Park home. Four unique all-suite lodges embody the character of "Yesterday," "Today," and "Tomorrow." We stayed at the Earth Lodge, and in between the twice daily game drives we enjoyed the indoor/outdoor dining area overlooking a waterhole, the library, art gallery, meditation garden, underground wine cellar, spa and gym. Animals came right up to the main lodge and rooms as if to greet us, and the facilities and amenities made it difficult to leave.

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