Privacy by Design: Kanana Nyana Opens

MAUN, BOTSWANA, October 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- **Ker & Downey's Kanana Nyana is shaped around closeness, from the scale of the camp to the refined way guests experience the wild**



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Kanana Nyana, the newest addition to the Ker & Downey family, has opened its doors in the Okavango Delta, welcoming its first guests to one of Africa's most extraordinary wilderness landscapes. From beneath a forested canopy, with views of the Xudum Channel and intimacy at its core, Kanana Nyana, or Little Kanana, was conceived as an architectural response to its setting. Archidea Architects designed the camp, with interiors by Reflecting Africa and construction by Nature Zone, creating an immersive evergreen forested camp experience where the line between built form and environment all but disappears.

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>
> *Ryno Verster, General Manager of Ker & Downey Botswana*

A CONCEPT SHAPED BY ISLANDS

The design centers on a single word, "nyana," the Setswana word for small, a nod to the camp's four safari suites alongside its sister camp Kanana. Like the small islands that dot the Delta, Kanana Nyana draws on the landscape's rhythms and island enclaves, from seasonal flood patterns and indigenous building traditions to wildlife movement through the area, with animal skin patterns and local landscapes shaping organic patterns and materials throughout. The idea reaches its fullest expression in the main building, where the fireplace serves as the ultimate gathering spot, a warm, communal space where guests close out the day's safari together. Small scale and

exquisite refinement carry through to every suite; each conceived as a private sanctuary within an already intimate camp.

INTERIORS INSPIRED BY THE TREES OUTSIDE

Reflecting Africa carried the enclave concept indoors with gentle curves inspired by the Delta's meandering waterways. Each guest room has its own identity, with a palette drawn from a tree growing in its immediate surroundings: the Marula, Sausage Tree, Jackalberry and Sycamore Fig. Rather than the familiar browns and greens of the bush, the palettes reflect the unexpected colors these trees take on as they flower, fruit and change through the seasons, from the soft pinks of the fig to the deep maroons of the sausage tree. Hand-painted watercolors by artist Alison Ross introduce guests to each species' qualities, forming botanical illustrations throughout Kanana Nyana.



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Marble was chosen for patterning that recalls the Delta seen from above and for the way it echoes the color palette of each tree species. Aged copper joinery facades, finished on site so that every piece became a small artwork, continue the dialogue with the landscape. Bespoke joinery by local Woodland Designs mirrors the waterways' curves while showcasing local talent in an age-old craft. Developed with the Ker & Downey in-house team, the rooms are luxurious yet homely, relaxed and welcoming.

BUILT TO BLEND INTO THE LANDSCAPE

Topography, prevailing cool winds, solar orientation, the lush forested canopy asset, and wildlife movement guided the placement of each camp structure. The buildings sit on elevated decks that minimize their footprint on the soil by not disturbing any tree root greater than 2 centimeters, allow water and ecological processes to continue uninterrupted, and assure

camouflage within the trees. Natural timber finishes, grass thatching, and a restrained palette of locally sourced materials echo the wilderness's colors and textures. Passive design principles, including building orientation, deep overhangs, natural ventilation, and controlled solar exposure, reduce energy demand, supported by evaporative cooling in the rooms.

AN INTIMATE EXPERIENCE

The number of guest rooms is deliberately small, and each of the four suites feels like a private, familiar retreat with uninterrupted views of the floodplain and the Xudum Channel. The shared spaces invite connection between guests while preserving privacy and a deep bond with the surroundings. Local craftsmanship and regional knowledge are woven throughout, supporting skills development in the community. The result is a lodge where genuine luxury hospitality coexists with conservation, and where architecture and interiors together deepen guests' awareness of their natural surroundings and encourage a reconnection with nature. At Kanana Nyana, true luxury lies not in the scale of the build but in the refinement of every detail, which turns a small camp into a true oasis.

Ryno Verster, General Manager of Ker & Downey Botswana, says the camp's design began with its setting: "Kanana Nyana was inspired by the forested, largely evergreen islands of the Okavango itself: secluded, serene and deeply connected to their environment. Its intimate scale and strong sense of place led us to focus on craftsmanship, considered design and the refined details. This is a camp whose character lies not in grandeur or excess, but in the subtle touches and genuine care that allow guests to effortlessly immerse themselves in the landscape surrounding them."

Rates seasonally vary from $1,200 up to $2,480 per person per night, fully inclusive.

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