



Red Ivory Hunting Safaris

& Safari Lodges

Kruger National Park - Activities

Numerous visitors to the Kruger National Park (KNP) have called this park the focal point of South African National Parks. Being the biggest national park in South Africa, visitors can expect an abundance of wildlife sightings, various accommodation options (ranging from pristine lodges to "roughing it" in nature camp sites) and a pure African bushveld setting as the backdrop.

Visitors need not to worry about how to fill their free time - KNP offers an exciting assortment of activities, each one bent on bringing the guest closer to nature and making them feel at home.

Whether it is eco trails, back packing, day walks... participants can rest assured that experienced, professional and armed guides will act as trail leaders and interpret the stunning environment at regular intervals. This allows the participants to get close to nature and experience its wonders like never before.

Explore your different options, and experience what the Kruger National Park is all about...

Bush BBQ

This unforgettable bush BBQ experience is not to be missed. A game drive leads you to an open area filled with burning lanterns and fires where, whilst listening to the sounds of the bushveld and the distant animals calling, the food is grilled on open fires.

General Birding

Kruger has a list of over 500 species, some of which are not to be found elsewhere in South Africa. Hornbills, Starlings, Vultures, Rollers, Bee-eaters and Shrikes typify the ubiquitous avifauna and birders can look forward to pursuing the big 6 (Saddle-billed Stork, Kori Bustard, Martial Eagle, Lappet-faced Vulture, Pel's Fishing-Owl and Ground Hornbill). The far north of the park (Pafuri and Punda Maria regions) is regarded as one of the birding Mecca's of the country (with many regional rarities to be found), yet birding throughout the entire park is excellent. Eagles are common: Bateleur, Martial, Black-chested Snake, Brown Snake, African Hawk, African Fish and Tawny are all regularly seen, and in summer: Wahlberg's, Steppe, Lesser Spotted. The Park's numerous water points make for excellent birding, while the rest camps and picnic sites are exceptionally rewarding for birders.

About the Wilderness Trails

A small percentage of South Africa is classified as real wilderness areas. In the Kruger National Park 49% of the surface area of about 2 million hectares are zoned as wilderness and it is in these areas that the KNP conduct wilderness trails.

There are thousands of wildlife destinations on the African continent but few of them offer an authentic wilderness experience to tourists. Driving around in an open game drive vehicle the whole time and staying in a luxury lodge is not necessary the real thing. Staying in a rustic, primitive camp and experiencing the African bush on foot is much closer to an ultimate wilderness type of recreation. That is what we offer the more adventurous tourist – wildness, remoteness, tranquillity, peace and a big bonus: no other people!

Although the KNP conduct trails in big five areas the main aim of these trails is to have a wilderness experience. The KNP Wilderness Trails cannot compete with other expensive luxury destinations as far as guaranteed game viewing and service is concerned but we can offer vast open spaces and a special kind of atmosphere that very few other destinations can match. Everybody nowadays offers big five as part of the package. Few can offer an experience of real bush exclusivity. KNP Wilderness Trails sees dangerous animals as part of the bigger picture and not the whole picture.

There are so much more to see and to experience and we focus not only on the big aspects of nature but also on the smaller things that most people miss when they only drive around. Being on foot makes you feel part of the environment and not removed from it when you spend your time in a vehicle. It tunes you in to all facets of nature because you can see, smell, hear, touch, feel and even taste wild things. Driving is a visual experience – walking is a sensual experience.

Wilderness ethics and philosophy are very important aspects of the KNP's presentation on trails. It is a sad fact that there are so few real wilderness areas left to the human race on earth and our mission is to create this awareness amongst our clients. The more people worldwide that stand up for our natural heritage the more we and future generations will benefit.

It is never the same people that we say goodbye to than the people that we've met. Simply because in a few days' people relax and enjoy it so much that they forget their problems and the outside world where they came from to such an extent that they become rejuvenated and recharged.

Morning Drives

Morning drives leave a half hour before official gate opening times, which vary according to the time of year, which means you will be the only guests driving around at that time. The drives' duration is 3 to 3.5 hours and you will be able to watch the sunrise over unspoilt bush. On your morning drive you will be able to enjoy the tranquillity of the Kruger National Park at Sunrise. You will be transported on one of our open vehicles from your camp of residence or entrance gate for an approximately three hour drive. An experienced guide will interpret the natural bush as well as offer further insight into the ways of the Kruger National Park.

Sunset Drives

These drives leave the camp before dusk and return after sunset lasting around three hours. Search for grazers in the cool afternoon and predators starting their nightly hunts. Sunset is a time when night animals emerge and a drive during this period is the perfect opportunity to witness the beauty of the bush as it changes from day to night. Learn about fauna and flora from our expert guides and return to camp with a spot-lit night drive.

Night Drives

The only way to see animals of the night, night drives depart at either 19:30 or 20:00 depending on the time of year and last for around two hours. Experienced guides drive the groups to spy on Kruger's nocturnal creatures and their secretive activities.

Guided Walks

Most of Kruger's camps provide guests with the opportunity to take part in daily early morning and afternoon guided walks. Up to eight guests are taken out of the camp's boundaries to explore the surrounding wilderness areas adjacent to the camp. These interesting spots make for exciting time-fillers, as experienced (and armed) guides share their knowledge of the fauna and flora to explain natural wonders. The walks are relaxed and don't take longer than a few hours, so no over exhaustion will take place.

Two armed field guides accompany you on the walk in order to ensure your safety; they will focus on the things that you will usually not be able to see from a vehicle. By being out on foot you cover an area more intensely and you are able to experience nature using all of your senses. If there is any large game in the area you are more than likely able to encounter them and have an exhilarating experience of approaching them on foot.

Comfortable shoes must be worn, and clothing should be natural colours and applicable to the prevailing weather conditions. Cameras and binoculars can be taken along, as very interesting sights will be discovered and guests can revel in the spotting of fascinating creatures and plant life. No children under 12 are allowed.

4x4 Adventure Trails

4x4 trails allow the visitor to get off the beaten track and explore territories of the park that are rarely seen. The 4x4 vehicles are essential to minimize environmental damage, and they serve as the gateway to a real wilderness experience in the park. Some of the trails have dongas or river beds that would make normal vehicles unfit for these trails, especially during the wet season. Because the adventure trails are not gravelled, they are usually closed after a rainfall in order to dry completely. The trails are self-drive and undertaken at one's own risk. Participants should note that there are no facilities along the routes. Please take great care at all times, especially when alighting from vehicles, and be aware of potential dangers. Participants are requested to take their GPS along. There is currently one adventure trail available within the KNP. A maximum of six vehicles are allowed per trail per day.

Backpacking Trails

Lonely Bull Trail

The Lonely Bull Trail is a primitive backpacking trail which starts from Mopani Rest Camp and is conducted in the large wilderness area between the Letaba low water bridge and the Mingerhout dam along the Letaba River.

The trail stretches over 4 days and three nights, with departures every Wednesday and Sunday between 1 February and 30 November. This trail allows its participants to spend three nights in this wilderness area without having the constraints of having to get to the next point or of following a prescribed route. The trail allows the trail leader to decide when and where to camp and how far and which route to follow. Hikers can leave their cars at Mopani Rest Camp in the designated parking area. The activity will be conducted by two experienced Trails Rangers and the maximum number of participants will be kept to eight people per trail with a minimum of 4 people. Guests are expected to provide their own camping equipment and food for the duration of the trail. There are no overnight huts on this trail. As the safety of hikers is of major importance, all participants have to bring tents and sleep in them every night while they are walking the trail. Participants will be responsible for setting up their own tents and for cooking their own food. No rubbish bins or toilets are provided at any of the overnight stops and the trail operates on a strictly "take it in, take it out" basis and strictly adheres to a "no trace camping" ethic. Please only use biodegradable products - soaps and detergents - on the trail.

- The group will meet at Mopani Rest Camp at 13:00 on the day of departure in order to leave the camp by 14h00. They will then be transported, using an open vehicle with a trailer, and dropped off at a predetermined drop off point (according to a rotational usage schedule).
- The group will then be collected at a predetermined collection point at 10h00 on the last day and transported back to Mopani Rest Camp. This ensures that walking can be done in any direction from the drop off point allowing the trails ranger to decide at random where to camp and how far to walk.
- The trails ranger will be able to plan a circular or direct route to the pre-arranged collection point and will also be able to decide whether to spend more than one night at a particular camp site or not. This will allow the group the opportunity to walk at a slower pace and to leave their back packs at the camp and they then don't have to lug heavy packs around and can enjoy more of the wilderness.

Olifants Trail

Commencing from Olifants Camp, this trail stretches over four days and three nights, covering about 42 km. The trail does not include any overnight huts, therefore hikers must bring their own tents to sleep in. The trail leader will choose a suitable camp site each night, and participants will be responsible for setting up their own tents and carrying/cooking their own food.

The first day's hike is quite an easy one of only 4-5 km to a camp site. For the remaining days, hikes will rise at the break of dawn to complete the first stretch of that day's hike. During the maximum heat of day, no walking will take place, and a siesta can be enjoyed.

During siesta time, hikers can revel in the wild environment: trying to spot exciting bird species on the Olifants River's banks, photographing the picturesque surroundings, soaking

up the African sun... After siesta time, only a short hike will cover the last remaining kilometres to the overnight camp. Whatever option you choose, siesta time is your time to enjoy nature.

Fires are set up each night, but only for social and safety reasons, not cooking. Firewood will be used sparingly, and hikers are advised to bring gas stoves for cooking. As the trail follows the Olifants River, there is adequate water suitable for drinking. However, purification tablets (chlorine) are necessary.

The landscape is characterised by rugged veld and rocky areas. Magnificent species of large trees, such as Apple Leaf and Sycamore Fig, are found in these parts. This backpacking trail requires hikers to cover 10-15 km each day, carrying heavy packs. Therefore, a reasonable amount of fitness is required, and participants must present a medical certificate that proves they are fit and in good health.

The trail leader is a qualified and armed field guide, assisted by a second armed guide, for additional peace of mind. The guides will carry basic first aid kits, but no medicine. It is the responsibility of all hikers to take along their own supplies of general/prescription medicine.

Mphongolo

A primitive backpacking trail that stretches over four days and three nights, with departures every Wednesday and Sunday between 1 February and 30 November. Starting at Shingwedzi Camp, the trail allows its participants/trail leader to decide when and where to camp and which route to follow. No prescribed route is followed.

Guests must bring their own camping equipment and food for the duration of the trail. No overnight huts are available. Trailists can delight in fires each night, but please note that they are meant simply for social and safety reasons, not for cooking. A reasonable level of fitness is required from all participants, as four consecutive days of walking and carrying heavy packs can really take it out of you. It is worth noting that hikers must sign an indemnity form, and that the trail is undertaken at the hiker's own risk.

Eco-Trails

Lebombo

Strictly speaking not a 4x4 challenge, this eco trail's road has the occasional steep inclines and muddy patches that must only be attempted with a 4x4 and genuine off-road trailers or caravans. The route may be closed completely after heavy rains.

The trail departs from Crocodile Bridge every Sunday and ends at Pafuri on a Thursday during the dry season from the 1st Sunday in April to the last Sunday in October, after which the rainy season normally commences.

Malopeni

A guided one night motorised adventure trail which travels along management roads in the area to the north-east of Phalaborwa Gate up to the Letaba River.

This route allows the tourist access to remote areas that are not frequented by many vehicles. The surrounding wilderness, the remoteness and the seclusion of travelling through rarely seen areas are the main thrills of this trail.

Trailists can brace themselves for numerous animal spoor, wildlife, vegetation, exciting birdlife and an abundance of breathtaking scenery.

A maximum of five (5) vehicles (four persons per vehicle) are guided by a SANParks professional guide in an official vehicle. All vehicles must be fully equipped in terms of their own camping equipment.

The landscape is full of geology formations, consisting mainly of granite and gneiss. Soils of the watersheds are generally deep and sandy. Wildlife can be spotted in the forms of elephant, buffalo, hippo, kudu and waterbuck. Nyala are also found, but in low densities.

Golf

The Skukuza Golf Course

The golf course was built in 1972 as a recreational facility for the Skukuza personnel, and is now available to visitors to the Kruger National Park. The Skukuza Golf Course is situated on the outskirts of Skukuza Rest Camp. The rich wildlife sanctuary surrounding the golf course is home to the Big Five, a huge variety of birds and countless animals, which all conspire to provide the visitor with a harmonious close-to-nature golfing experience.

Since the course is not fenced-in, uninvited spectators are a common sight, hippo, impala, warthog and baboons to mention but a few. The Skukuza Golf Course has no bunkers, although 'aerial bunkers' abound because of the many trees found on the course.

Tee-off times are available for visitors in the mornings between 07:00 and 11:00 from Sunday to Friday. Please book in advance to avoid disappointment. Saturdays are Club Days for our members or a Sponsor's Day and it's a Two Field-Morning and Afternoon. It's a Shotgun Start and the morning field is 06:30 for 07:00, the afternoon field is 12:00 for 12:30 in summer and half an hour earlier in winter. No late entries are accepted.

An indemnity form must be completed prior to playing. Standard golf dress code applies. Caddies are normally available on weekends but we do not make bookings for caddies. Motorised Golf Carts and Pull Carts are available for hire. Light refreshments and full bar facility daily.

The Skukuza Golf Course is designed for all levels of golfers. Please bring along your golf clubs next time you visit the Kruger National Park and enjoy one of the most unique 9-hole golf courses in the world.

Elephant Museum:

In Letaba is the well-known Elephant museum, all the big tuskers is on display, and some magnificent tusks can be viewed, including interesting information regarding elephants.

