

Travel **Essence** MAGAZINE

ISSUE 14 • JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2022

DESERT
GLAMPING AT
MOON RETREAT
BY MYSK

*One with
nature*

AT MATETSI
VICTORIA FALLS

ATLANTIS
THE PALM:
Inside Dubai's
Hospitality Icon

Stargazing
DESERT SAFARI
ACROSS NAMIBIA

YVONNE MTENGWA

CHAMPIONING AFRICA'S GLORY THROUGH
THE VOICES OF HER PEOPLE

KIZA


TOMORROW AFRICA


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Culture • Lifestyle • Taste-Making

TravelEssence

MAGAZINE

Culture • Lifestyle • Taste-Making





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 Travel Essence Magazine

Published by Narratives PR LLC – FZ
Registered at Ras Al Khaimah
Economic Zone (RAKEZ)

“For Africa to me... is more than a glamorous fact. It is a historical truth. No man can know where he is going unless he knows exactly where he has been and exactly how he arrived at his present place.

— MAYA ANGELOU

I trust you entered the year with hope and gratitude. Happy New Year TE Family!

With each passing day, we ask ourselves where time is taking us. Entering 2022 brought with it a sense of curiosity of what the new year would unveil, given the magnitude of challenges that most would agree to have experienced in the year that passed. 2021 brought with it a multitude of questions and conversations. There was something to say about the economy, the pandemic, job security, our health and that of our loved ones, challenges to do with climate change and protection of our planet, travel bans and the resultant inability to move from one place to the next at certain intervals. There were so many more questions along the way, with us not always having the answers. But we are here now – and we made it into 2022. The New Year is upon us, and though it began with more rises in COVID cases and flight restrictions across the globe, we forge ahead having been equipped with lessons from having survived since the onset of the pandemic. We are optimistic, we are resolute; and one foot in front of the other, we build towards the changes we would like to see in an ailing yet still very beautiful world.

Last year was a big year for domestic tourism as the wanderlust within was further unleashed. We survived lockdowns of yester-season, and so we were not about to be held back by our inability to get our passports stamped. We discovered more of what's local, we became more conscious of sustainability in travel, getting more value for our money with our lifestyle choices and escapism was widely viewed as an opportunity to reconnect with self.

In 2022, we can expect more excursions as more countries roll out their vaccination booster programmes, and we become more comfortable with the idea of travelling during a pandemic. We all understand the rules now (and the cost of being unceremoniously locked out of our countries of

residence), and value safety in all our interactions. I was blown away by the levels of commitment in ensuring health and safety protocols were adhered to during my most recent travels to East and Southern Africa. Africa is doing an incredible job in ensuring the safety of its residents and inbound tourists and I encourage more people to discover the magic of our wondrous continent.

Also on the radar is the notion of wellness and self-development retreats. Our innate hunger to learn and grow continues, and what better way to do so than in the open spaces far from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Remote working is here to stay, and more people are saying yes to packing a bag and marooning somewhere for a few weeks while they work. Road trips, adventure excursions, safaris and all-inclusive luxury holidays are high on the agenda for the upwardly mobile because life has taken on a new meaning over the years.

At Travel Essence Magazine, we are thrilled to be looking ahead at yet another year of inspiring you to check out more of what's in your city, while ensuring you schedule in time on your annual calendar to retreat for much needed time away. Take some time out to be out with nature. I cannot express to you just how life-changing sitting on a boat on the Zambezi with its engine off is, or driving through the winding roads of the Western Cape or taking a stroll on Zanzibar's beaches at dusk – is a reminder that there is so much more meaning to life than our minds can conceive.

For your ongoing support – we are grateful. Wishing you a prosperous remainder of the year ahead and here's to more discovery and learning of self and others! 🌍

Your truly,

Zygonne C. Mtengwa



Travel
Essence
Getaways

YOUR CALL TO EXPLORING AFRICA

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Contents

ISSUE 14 | JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2022

Cover Story

08 | The TravelEssence Story: Championing Africa's Beauty Through Our Voices

By Yvonne C Mtengwa

Editor's Pick

14 | Uncontested Luxury and Riverfront serenity at Matetsi Victoria Falls

By Yvonne C Mtengwa

20 | Atlantis The Palm: Dubai's Iconic Destination For Idyllic Indulgence

24 | Revier Dubai: A taste of the Swiss Alps in the heart of Business Bay

Taste-makers

30 | Dare To Claim The Planet Back

By Mucha Nyandoro



20



34



40



44

Adventures In Wild Africa

34 | Discover Loisaba With The Elewana Collection

40 | A Stargazing Desert Safari In Namibia Unlike Any Other

44 | Saving Zanzibar's Turtle Population

by Daphine Mabhiza



08



The Wanderlust Within

48 | Desert glamping anyone? 6 Reasons Why You Should Experience Sharjah's Moon Retreat By Mysk

By Yvonne C Mtengwa

54 | Belmond Offers A New Way To Experience The Okavango Delta



48

Pulse Of The City

58 | Classic Hospitality At Cape Town's Landmark Southern Sun The Cullinan

62 | Creativity Reimagined At The Hallmark Hotel

By Yvonne C Mtengwa

Africa To The World

66 | Discover The Mauritius Pavillion At Expo 2020 Dubai



66



The TravelEssence Story:

Championing Africa's Beauty Through Our Voices

By Yvonne C. Mtengwa
Founder, Editor-in-Chief, Travel Essence Magazine

July 2022 marks 2 years since the launch of Travel Essence Magazine, and even as I sit at my desk somewhere in the desert on the outskirts of Dubai, I marvel at just how a decision could result in such a profound journey of meaningful connections with people, novel places and bodies of work slated to impact generations to come. You see, somewhere along my journey in destination marketing did I allow the dream to one day run a magazine to rest on my heart.

Perhaps it took this long...a good 12 years after my first job in hospitality in Zimbabwe's border town of Victoria Falls...for it manifest because I simply didn't think I had what it took. Perhaps the timing wasn't right until now. I can openly say I needed to build on my industry knowledge before I could put myself in the position to excitedly write about it. What I am sure of today though, is just how grateful I am to watch this media baby grow, having been birthed from sheer passion for storytelling, spurred on by a personal call to action to contribute towards supporting players riddled by the global pandemic in an industry I owe so much.

This publication has been fed during many sleepless nights, with countless words typed over emails and articles, and pictures and digital galleries combed over as we looked for the visual assets to make this ‘baby’ truly stand out among many. I’m incredibly thankful for the army of people who have been a part of our creative process along the way, and those industry mavericks that have valued our work so early on such that they were willing to endorse us through partnerships and collaboration. This journey has shown us that it’s not as easy to find images of Africans enjoying a safari experience on stock image galleries, nor is it easy to find African owned lodges, hotels, bush camps and tour operators about which we can write. Mulling over what content will go into each Issue has also awakened us to the magnitude of privately funded conservation efforts taking place on the continent to protect our wildlife and preserve the environment for generations to come, right through to how many hospitality, tourism and travel professionals and entrepreneurs are willing to share their story given a platform to do so. Speaking to African small business owners who too started with a dream in mind and a few dollars in savings has been the fuel that has kept us going, highlighting to us the resilient nature of humanity when strong, vision-inspired belief is at play.

THE WHY OF IT ALL...

One may bear numerous titles and adorn a multitude of hats during the course of their life, and I for one can attest to the sense of pride that comes with witnessing unanticipated victories after putting in the work. As I etch closer to 20 years of professional acumen in the field of marketing, shifting into the PR and communications space after relocating to the famed UAE going on 9 years ago, the opportunity to curate a visually immersive publication that promotes Africa’s people, diverse cultures and captivating destinations remains one of my greatest accomplishments.

Yes, delivering cutting edge corporate and consumer-focused PR campaigns for global brands, hosting celebrities during their visits to the Middle East, launching new concepts, rolling out activations and stunts on both client and agency-side communications, have award-



ed me some proud moments, but this journey we are on today, right now – as Travel Essence Magazine – is something that brings me a different type of joy and excitement. We do what we do because its up to us to tell anyone who will listen how incredibly beautiful Africa is. Many of us profess to love our continent, but how often do we speak of it in the manner that inspire others to experience its heart and soul. We are quick to laud over London or Los Angeles or Dubai or Kuala Lumpur, but will we do the same over Nairobi, Accra, Cape Town, or Casablanca? We may venture up the Alps or Rocky Mountains but are Mount Kilimanjaro or the Atlas Mountains anywhere on our radar? Cancun, Majorca, and Phuket sound incredible, but what about the beaches of Flic en flac in Mauritius or Kenya's Diani?

“Africa is beautiful but...”

“Visiting Africa will change your life but...”

It's the “but” we want others to view as “because”. Africa is beautiful because... Visiting Africa will change your life because...

BUILDING OUR OWN TABLES

I read the words “NO” and “WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT...” many times in the year 2020. A move down the road from Abu Dhabi to Dubai brought with a whole new challenge that became a part of everyone's narrative even today. COVID-19. No one saw it coming. We all sat in disbelief as news came out of China that there was this deadly virus that was taking the lives of its citizens at unprecedented rates. It wasn't too long before borders shut, skies closed, and each nation grappled to not only understand what this outbreak was all about, but how to contain it.

Dubai had beamed, and I was excited to join a new firm in the very exciting world of PR that would award me experiences in this Middle Eastern metropolis renowned for its aggressive pursuit for global dominance. I had moved on from heading up the PR function at The Leading Theme Park in the World – Ferrari World Abu Dhabi – and so in my mind, it would be intriguing to see what could scale riding the fastest roller coast in the world during a coffee break or being a part of some cool activations centered around the fiery innovation of brand Ferrari. Except that new career move never happened. The pandemic took over, and with it came many companies shutting down, and roles that were huge prospects disappearing



into oblivion. It was one LinkedIn post from a colleague in the hospitality space, aptly describing how much the industry was grappling from the rampant travel restrictions that would become the impetus for building our own table in the UAE and pan-African print and digital media space.

No one was talking about Africa except through negative assertions. Headlines like “vaccinate Africans” became the norm for a time, and the western-powered media drives to peddle Africa as the continent that would be obliterated by COVID-19 continued to increase. Factually, Africa's COVID-19 numbers were far less than the UK, the USA, Italy, and others – and many of us from the African continent were relieved but found ourselves increasingly irritated by the discourse concerning the continent's responsiveness to the pandemic. My growing disdain at the news headlines became the fuel needed to embark on this journey of promoting the continent I missed so much. Perhaps it was being couped up in the house for a year or the inability to travel back home for the first time in many years that led to that first email, asking friends and former colleagues if they would be interested in sharing information on their business for this new magazine I was working on.

More people needed to see Africa in a new light, and now was the time to harness the power of propagating positive messaging through difficult times. The pandemic times were to become fertile ground to plant more seeds in encouraging more travellers to, when the skies open, consider the diverse landscapes in Africa's most compelling destinations. It's has always been time for Africa, but it became our time to create something new in the media space, and proudly African, out of Dubai, one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world.

IT'S OUR AFRICA TO PROMOTE!

In the words of Rudyard Kipling: “One cannot resist the lure of Africa.” It is in the sound of our beating hearts and that of drums that create her rhythm. It is in the hearty laughs of our sons and daughters and the lines of resilience on our faces as we

navigate the world. Africa is a whole vibe; our people carry that magical something expressed in countless ways. Yet there has never been a better time where we as a people must view it from the perspectives of the colonizing minds that have sought to occupy it for themselves. Our continent is remarkable, with much untapped opportunity, but do we as Africans know this? Are we using our voices as her sons and daughters to advocate for the victory laps we want to across within and across the borders of 54 nations and their individual political, societal, economic, cultural, religious, and environmental ecosystems? Our job in the media space is to be that rallying cry encouraging residents and expats to consider the side that mainstream media isn't in a hurry to show us. We can by no means cover all topics, but we can pique the curiosities of minds far and wide to want to unearth more.

I like many others, have always wondered why there is so much noise about Africa yet unrelenting pursuit to occupy territories on its soil, be it for mineral wealth or commercial opportunity. Halfway through 2020, Asia was long closed, Europe was closing, the US was headed that way and Africa was watching. In the travel and tourism sector, with conversations around looming airline bankruptcies and industry outlook, we soon witnessed pivoting by necessity. Local tourism became a strong drive for hospitality entities and tour operators, unlocking a shift in traveller sentiment, as words such as “slow travel” and “conscious travel” came to the fore. No one could get to New York or London or Dubai in a hurry, with obvious hesitation surrounding onboard health and safety protocols during long haul flights. Local became “lekker” as a spirited discovery of places to see and explore locally elevated. And this was good news to us, because we too joined the growing number of industry stakeholders talking numbers, unpacking campaigns, and highlighting unique selling propositions through the lens of African voices across the continent and within the Middle East.

A TALE OF PROFESSIONAL INSPIRATION TO MEDIA-PRENEURSHIP

“I’ve written speeches for some of the region’s top CEOs and been on the team that led the PR for the inaugural and second edition of the Mother of the Nation Festival on Abu Dhabi corniche. I’ve had the unique privilege of having a seat at the table as discussions on how to drive the messaging around the opening of Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum and Abu Dhabi emirate’s Your extraordinary

story global destination marketing campaign were had. Picture being an African woman, hosting a media tour on the construction site of Jwveher Saadiyat and Mamsha Al Saadiyat luxury villas and apartments on Saadiyat Island or whizzing across the Persian Gulf from Al Bateen Marina, past the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and onto the Mangroves in a speed boat with media, after the launch of the region’s first dry stacking system at Marsa Al Bateen.


What about hosting Scuderia Ferrari F1 driver Charles Leclerc at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi during the 2019 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix or riding the world’s fastest roller coaster Formula Rossa with celebrities Alicia Keys and Swizz Beatz, former Manchester United Football star Rio Ferdinand or rapper Post Malone? Did I mention I also spent the afternoon watching how a Ferrari is made on the Ferrari campus in Maranello, Italy; an opportunity exclusive only to Ferrari owners but availed to me in my capacity of the PR Head for the iconic Ferrari World Abu Dhabi? I could go on and on about some of my career highlights as a PR professional navigating the exciting, albeit demanding UAE and regional PR and communications landscape. Mine has been a journey of sheer marvel at how God can position one for prominence and influence if they work really hard and show up with enthusiasm regardless of the challenges thrown at them.”

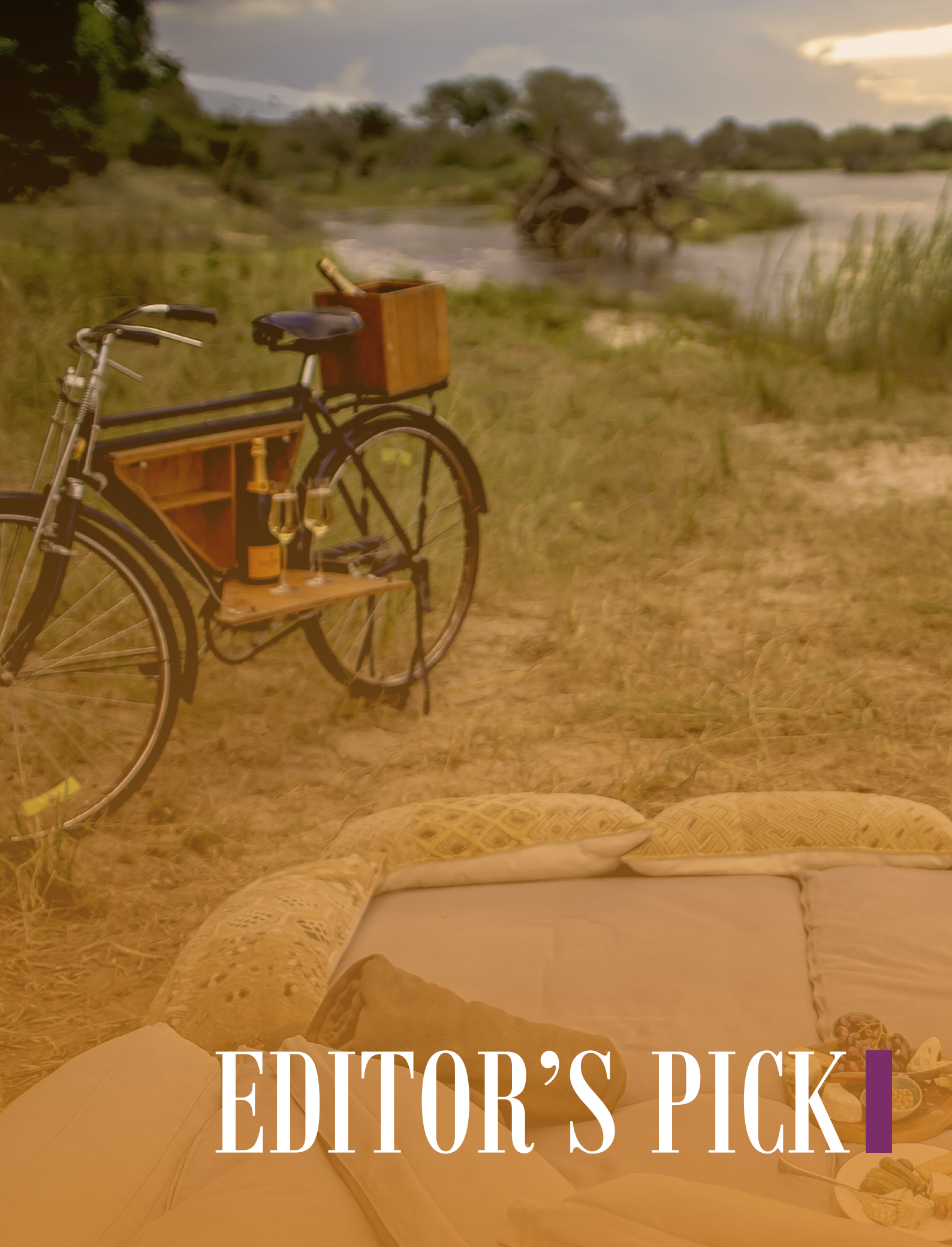
This is an excerpt from a publication I co-authored on my journey as a black and African expat living in the UAE, and a clear encapsulation of what inspired moving Travel Essence Magazine from ideation to a publication that our readers now look forward to every few weeks. The onset of COVID-19 drew out that longstanding dream to one day run a publication that would speak to my areas of passion – travel, lifestyle, entrepreneurship, conservation, and sustainability. As the Nos kept coming in through professional doors I was knocking on, particularly in the publishing in space I hoped to penetrate once in Dubai, I viewed it as an opportunity to create a table we could all be proud of as Africans living and working in the Middle East, leveraging my professional successes to sell our continent in an awe-inspiring way while awakening the wanderlust in each of us.

The Travel Essence Magazine evolving story is a labour of love really; an inherent desire to showcase the wonderment of the continent we call home. I’ve lived more than half my life in lands beyond our coastal lines, but still, even with the glistening skyscrapers of some of the world class cities I’ve called home for a time, there is no place that my heart sings a louder



song, and where I truly feel at home, than when my feet touch the soil of Africa. It is my desire that collectively, as African people or people of African descent scattered across the world, we do our part to show and tell more on the majesty of an entire civilisation and the spaces in which our hearts are etched, to anyone who will listen. After all, in the words of Brian Jackman...

“AFRICA CHANGES YOU FOREVER, LIKE NOWHERE ON EARTH. ONCE YOU HAVE BEEN THERE, YOU WILL NEVER BE THE SAME. BUT HOW DO YOU BEGIN TO DESCRIBE ITS MAGIC TO SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER FELT IT? HOW CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE FASCINATION OF THIS VAST, DUSTY CONTINENT, WHOSE OLDEST ROADS ARE ELEPHANT PATHS? COULD IT BE BECAUSE AFRICA IS THE PLACE OF ALL OUR BEGINNINGS, THE CRADLE OF MANKIND, WHERE OUR SPECIES FIRST STOOD UPRIGHT ON THE SAVANNAHS OF LONG AGO?” 



EDITOR'S PICK |

A photograph of a rustic interior, likely a lodge or cabin, featuring a wall made of woven reeds or bamboo. The scene is framed by dark wooden pillars and a window with horizontal wooden slats. A white rope basket sits on a ledge in the foreground. The background shows a dry, wooded area with sparse trees. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Uncontested Luxury and Riverfront serenity at Matetsi Victoria Falls





Matetsi Victoria Falls was our last pitstop on our weeklong trip to Victoria and Hwange before heading back to Dubai. Curated by Vayeni Safaris, established African Safari Experts that design extraordinary journeys in 11 key destinations across the African continent, I was looking forward to experiencing luxury on the banks of the Zambezi like never before; a promise I had long been given by others who had enjoyed the privilege of staying there during their time in the border town of Victoria Falls.

By Yvonne C Mtengwa

We arrived at sunset after a 30-40 drive from town center, where we were picked up after some adrenaline-filled fun at the base of the majestic Mosi-oa-tunya. Quiet a drive, easily because of how knackered we were from our jetboating experience, my mind drifted as I watched the sun set over the savannah grasslands that surrounded us. In no time, excitement welled up again as we made the right turn onto the dust road that leads you into Matetsi Private Game Reserve. With sightings of buffalo and small herds of elephant on our way in, it was the sounds and smells of Zimbabwe's western region that reminded me of the year I had spent in this part of my home country more than a decade ago.

I used to make that drive between Victoria Falls and Kazungula Border post quite a bit as a young lodge manager at one of the boutique accommodations in the area, setting off at dawn to Kasane town in Botswana with the procurement team and returning at sunset from our fresh produce and imported goods buying trips, simply because there was a wider selection across the border. It was surreal to be back in Victoria Falls, this time not as an employee of a neighbouring property but as a whole media personality, experiencing the product so we could promote it to travel enthusiasts out of the Middle East.

A MATETSI STYLE WELCOME...

The welcoming clapping of hands from the team at Matetsi brought my mind back to where it had wandered off into the archives of my memories. With beaming smiles and engaging conversation right at the onset, it felt like being ushered home by your loved ones after having been away for a very long time. Canoe-like wooden carvings hung from the stone wall at the entryway, perfectly designed to ensure seamless blending with nature. With a welcome cocktail in hand, and calming call of the Zambezi River a few steps away, I couldn't help but take a deep breath in, before exhaling in sheer appreciation of that moment. We absolutely loved the time our hosts – the Matetsi team – took to come out one by one for a brief chat on any and all things we felt





To learn more about Matetsi Victoria Falls, visit www.matetsivictoriafalls.com

like talking or asking about. From sharing recommendations of what guests before us had experienced, to shedding more light on the history of the area, the teeming wildlife and cool facts about the team that were going to be looking after us, two nights of awe-inspiring luxury were going to be my lot before heading back to the desert, and I couldn't wait to experience all that was laid out for our itinerary.

The main guest area boasts immaculately furnished open spaces, a stunning copper bar, an interactive kitchen, covered and al fresco dining areas, as well as a boma. We were graciously informed that dinner could be wherever we settled for, and so because ours had been a long day, we opted to partake of dinner under the starlit skies and to the sound of the night coming alive before heading to our private, individually constructed suites. Blazing fire bowls and lanterns created the perfect mood to enjoy a spectacular dinner and drinks, before turning in ahead of the adventures that awaited us the day after.

REFINED LUXURY ON THE BANKS OF THE ZAMBEZI RIVER

Your experience will be the most exclusive within the destination, with service that's as unsurpassed as it is unforgettable. Beyond having a personal butler anticipating every need, from delivering a freshly brewed cup of coffee as part of your morning wakeup call should you not feel like making it for

yourself from the in-room coffee station, knowing when to hand you a refreshing cocktail at any point during the day, to which activity to propose for your next adventure, there was much to marvel at from the point of arrival to being escorted to my own private lodge suite.

The imposing wooden double door unveiled a lavish suite, characterised by air-conditioning, a sumptuous draped king-size bed with full view of the river outside the floor to ceiling glass doors, circular standout bathtub, indoor and outdoor rain showers, a private plunge pool and decks that flank inspiring views of the Zambezi. Suites are spacious, difficult to leave on account of unparalleled comfort, and every much a fitting reminder that while you are there, it is recommended that you still time so you can truly take in the remarkable nature of your accommodations and surrounding from which they rest.

Décor and design are an uninhibited ode to the wonders of nature, such that it is no wonder why Matetsi Victoria Falls has received significant acclaim for exquisite, distinctly African contemporary interiors. Polished earth finishes, lustrous hand-beaten local copper detailing, and seamless flows between interior and exterior living spaces will envelope you into your surroundings, with the theme of 'Life on the River', as conceptualised by the Zimbabwean architectural designer at the helm of this opulently designed lodge, shining through ever so subtly with the use of custom features, artworks and finishings by local artisans.

CULINARY IMMERSION AT MATETSI VICTORIA FALLS

Our dining experience, anchored by some of the finest chefs on the continent, took us on an exquisite exploration that merged organic ingredients and scintillating flavours. No vacation is complete without a memorable culinary experience as the subject of food and drink are in every sense a conversation opener as they are an illustration of the culture and hospitality of a place. Matetsi Victoria Falls understand that the food and drink moments are a quintessential element of the guest experience, and so the team does well to provide guests with the opportunity to experience a variety of dining experiences, created with the most discerning of palettes in mind.

Menus are freshly prepared and merge regionally sourced, exceptional produce, with the passion of the chefs that prepare them coming through in plating and all-round food service. We enjoyed one of our lunches at the Wine Cellar, an incredible space that invokes a spirit of quiet introspection over a glass of local and imported wines, beers, cognacs, and cigars for those who partake. With a fine spread of cured meats, cheeses, and olives, that afternoon was everything we needed to relax further, ahead of a private sunset cruise on one of the lodges boats.

SAFARI AT MATETSI VICTORIA FALLS

The vast 136,000-acre Matetsi Private Game Reserve is home to Matetsi Victoria Falls, offering a truly exclusive safari experience for every type of guest. Located at the heart of the KAZA trans frontier, the world largest trans frontier conservation area, this expansive wilderness has no fences and so wildlife uninhibited, meaning that you get to enjoy game viewing at any time of day, either as a game drive at dawn or dusk, or guided walks with a ranger and tracker. Opportunities for full day game drives with lunch served on wild safari turf are also available,






where you can learn more about the breeding patterns of elephant and buffalo, with particularly impressive numbers emerging during the dry season.

The surrounding wilderness is rife with large prides of lion while the elusive leopard and active wild dog, impala and baboon thrive within the confines of the Matetsi Private Game Reserve. Giraffes enjoy the albida trees, while zebra and kudu, Wildebeest, Sable, Roan and Eland roam in the Reserve's south. Matetsi Victoria Falls is truly the home of diverse species of flora and fauna, such that we had the privilege on one night of having to enter the main lodge area through a back entrance as a small herd of elephant had formed a blockade within the trees that surrounded the entrance.

WILDLIFE FROM THE RIVER

Guests can also set aside time to go canoeing or a sunset cruise, taking in the wonders of nature from the Zambezi River. From sightings of hippos to small buck foraging the ground's surface near shore, to spectacular birdlife perched on branches of indigenous trees, you can truly enjoy tapping into the knowledge of your expert guide or bask in the stillness of the river's surface as you navigate the calming ecosystem along the tranquil section of the Zambezi.

Matetsi Victoria Falls offers the ideal combination of safari, river, Victoria Falls and relaxation all wrapped up in warm genuine Zimbabwean hospitality. A stay on this river front luxury lodge is an open call to connect oneself with self and with nature, creating memories that speak to the calmer wanderlust and the adrenaline seeker alike. For those with a knack for design and culinary exploration on the backdrop of stunning spaces, Matetsi Victoria Falls is sure to leave you with many a tale to tell on all the trimmings of a luxurious, idyllic retreat in Zimbabwe's Victoria Falls region. 



Atlantis The Palm: Dubai's Iconic Destination For Idyllic Indulgence

Located on the furthestmost tip of Dubai's world-renowned Palm Island, Atlantis the Palm remains the largest hotel and most iconic destination to offer award-winning excitement for the entire family. Having first opened its doors to guests in 2008 on Dubai's prolific manmade island, Atlantis the Palm unveils a world of true escapism, where dreams come alive and one partakes of the extraordinary.



With carpets of turquoise to resemble the calming waters of the Arabian Gulf in full view from your Palm or Ocean-view room cradling your feet, to indulging in decadent creations from the resort's resident and internationally acclaimed celebrity chefs, feeling the rush as you explore a plethora of water attractions at Aquaventure Waterpark, or immersing yourself in wellness-inspired spa experiences, Atlantis The Palm offers the best all that your mind imagines for a holiday or staycation of a lifetime. Remarkable stories will be told with a stay at this crown jewel of a resort in Dubai, and so if you are thinking of where you can luxuriate in true "joie de vivre" form – here are just a few reasons why Atlantis The Palm will make it worth your while to make a booking when in Dubai:

1. Stand-out in-room design aesthetic to inspire ultimate relaxation. Guest rooms and suites truly leave a lasting impression, whisking you away into a dreamy space that invokes romance and relaxation as much as it does spirited adventure. Turquoise, peachy and pearl coloured hues welcome you to your sanctuary,



allowing you to easily drift off into peaceful relaxation and restful slumber when the time suits.

Guests can choose from rooms housing one king bed or two queen beds, with Palm Hotel Rooms providing perfect spaces for a couple's retreat or family vacation. 24-hour room service is available, with a full visual entertainment option on offer from the wide-screen TVs, making it just as inviting to spend some time in your room as it is to venture out and discover what's available at the resort.

2. Elevated, grand style opulence when staying in Signature suites. These include the famed Underwater Suite, which features immense floor-to-ceiling windows into the resort's 65,000 marine animal aquarium in Dubai, and comfortably fits 2 adults and 2 children under 14.

Atlantis, The Palm's 220sqm Presidential Suite balances elegance and grandeur in a truly remarkable setting, boasting a stately lounge, lavish dining area, separate office space and a walk-in closet. If it's an extra level of comfort and luxury you are after, including views of the Atlantis Beachfront, an oversized jacuzzi tub, ultimate privacy and a personal butler 24-hours a day, this suite would be the perfect choice.

The Grand Atlantis Suite and Royal Bridge Suites leave no stone unturned, delivering spaces and service excellence fit for royalty and celebrity status. All signature suites avail access to the Atlantis Kids Club, breakfast in bed or on your private terrace, in-room dining, airport transfers, private butler service and so much more.

3. Dine at your favourite celebrity chef's restaurant. Few resort destinations in the world award you a culinary experience at so many award-winning restaurants, some owned by celebrity chefs, and unique dining and entertainment options all housed under one roof. Nobu, Gordon Ramsey's Bread Street Kitchen and Bar, Hakkasan, Ronda Locatelli and Ossiano offer unchartered fine dining and elegant casual dining experiences, while Wavehouse, White Beach Club, Saffron and Kaleidoscope and others dotted across the resort's entire complex, offer dining infused with entertainment as well as international buffets for every preference in cuisine. Just about every flavour and cuisine is catered for at Atlantis the Palm's remarkable selection of high end, casual dining and beachside outlets.

4. Family fun awaits you at Atlantis Aquaventure. What's a beachfront adventure without a the opportunity to either slow things down or turn them up a notch? Home to 105 record-breaking slides, attractions and experiences spread across 22 hectares of beachfront space, if its

cool water to bring down your temperatures while elevating your adrenaline, there is exciting fun for the entire family at Atlantis Aquaventure.

Try out high thrill attractions like Blackout, Odyssey of Terror and Zoomerango, or relax on your sunbed at Aquaventure Beach with an icy beverage in hand. Escape the sun's heat as you navigate the park in River Rapids and Trident's River or watch your tots play at Splashers Kids' Area, the biggest kid's only waterpark experience in the Middle East. There really is something to enjoy for everyone.

5. Bucket list activities for the adventurers within. Soar to new heights with a helicopter tour that gives you incredible vistas of the resort and Dubai from above. Jet ski over the Persian Gulf's waters. Discover a world below the seas by swimming with 65,000 marine species at Ambassador Lagoon. With many an exciting activity to experience, you are spoiled for choice if you are looking for an adventure outside the box.

6. Luxurious treatments and fitness experiences delivered from world class wellness facilities. From hydrating facials, enriching exfoliation treatments, revitalising massages and personalised skin-care treatments using the latest beauty-inspired innovations, there are several options for a little self-care during your stay. Did we mention that you can also try underwater yoga and pilates, connecting your mind and body with the marine life in Lost Chambers!?

7. Sprawling beaches for some sun and sand. Aquaventure Beach has got you covered as you enjoy the azure waters on which it lies, and some great food and beverage options to relish during your day out at the beach. If you are looking for a more exclusive experience that's far from the crowds that come with some of Dubai's public beaches, then an afternoon of sun and at Atlantis the Palm's beaches will award you an experience you can create great memories from.


8. Swim with the Dolphins during your stay. Interact with the sea's most intelligent mammals, the bottlenose dolphins, in an insightful experience that teaches you about the world of dolphins. From meet and greets with dolphins, swim and play sessions where you learn more about their behaviours and biology, to dive sessions where you watch them swim around you, there are experiences tailored to suit your curiosity. Also, for every marine animal experience booked, 1 USD is donated to conservation, sustainability, and environmental educational initiatives as part of the Atlantis Atlas Project.

Discover marine life and the largest open-air aquarium in Africa and the Middle East. Get your adrenaline pumping with an underwater shark safari, dive with 65,000 marine species, participate in one of the Ambassador Lagoon's educational programmes, explore the Lost Chambers Aquarium or book your children in for a

Fish Tales Tour; an experience that teaches them from a behind-the-scenes tour of Dubai's favourite aquarium. If it's up close encounters with marine life you are looking for, there are countless interactive experiences to enhance your knowledge on all things marine.

9. An idyllic destination for your special event. Whether it's a conference, a wedding, a special dinner party with your colleagues or loved ones, a romantic

couples' retreat or fun-filled staycation commemorating a birthday or honeymoon – Atlantis the Palm is the ultimate to curate any event in celebration of every kind of occasion.

A resort with literally every experience imaginable, Atlantis the Palm Dubai is your enthralling destination for the entire family, confidently guaranteeing an experience you will remember for a lifetime. 



To learn more about this crown jewel of Dubai and the Palm Island, visit www.atlantis.com/dubai





REVER

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Revier Dubai

A taste of the Swiss Alps in the heart of Business Bay

A new, and Swiss-inspired kid on the blocks of Dubai's fast evolving Business Bay, is a gem that without a shadow of a doubt, takes its guests from the desert dunes of the Middle East to the cool mountainous regions of Switzerland – except without having to leave the city. Revier Dubai exudes youthfulness, vibrance and cosy appeal, tuning one's senses to a spirit of adventure, juxtaposed with a determined need for connectivity in one of the most innovative cities in the world. Travel Essence Magazine had the opportunity to experience this property, and there were many takeaways to have us looking forward to our return...

A stay in Dubai denotes multicultural experiences that elevate shared ideas and a celebration of life. Everything is fast and exuberant, and so when a new hotel welcomes its first guests, there is a challenge to explore the offering, perhaps creating memories beyond the rudimentary chat over a coffee or a cocktail. Revier Dubai, recently opened, conveniently located a stone throw away from Dubai Canal, and short drive from landmarks Dubai Mall and the Burj Khalifa, is a place where you will instinctively feel good from the moment you check in. Friendly engaging staff usher you into a space reminiscent of a luxurious mountain lodge or log cabin, except you are in the city, where rolling sand dunes form its periphery.

A retreat within the city

With a distinctively vibrant touch, Revier Dubai combines comfort and modernity without compromising on the brand's Swiss roots. Tech savvy amenities, chic co-working spaces, a rustic, industrial space inspired design aesthetic, all welcome guests to cosy yet functional spaces perfect for every type of guest.

The Revier brand takes pride in its Swiss heritage, with service excellence an illustration of the passion that drives ambition to award guests a memorable experience in the most honest and purest way possible. From the design of the hotel all the way to your bed-side lamp, everything has been crafted to inspire modern nomads to script their experiences and connect with others during their stay.

EDITOR'S PICK • REVIER DUBAI

Guests can choose between homely 25sqm spaces, interconnected rooms perfect for families and Revier Suites, which award more space with separate living, work and play areas, spacious bathrooms with walk in showers and bathtubs. Whatever your needs are in room size, there's a suitable type within the walls of Revier Dubai to make your stay comfortably convenient.

The Revier Dubai experience is very much in tune with current trends in hospitality that caters to the young and upwardly mobile traveller; a future-ready brand encounter that maintains Swiss efficiency, push the boundaries of the unconventional, while providing the usual refined and high-quality service you deserve. Everything is as simple as it gets, personalised and original, taking great care to ensure guests stay and leave having had their expectations met.

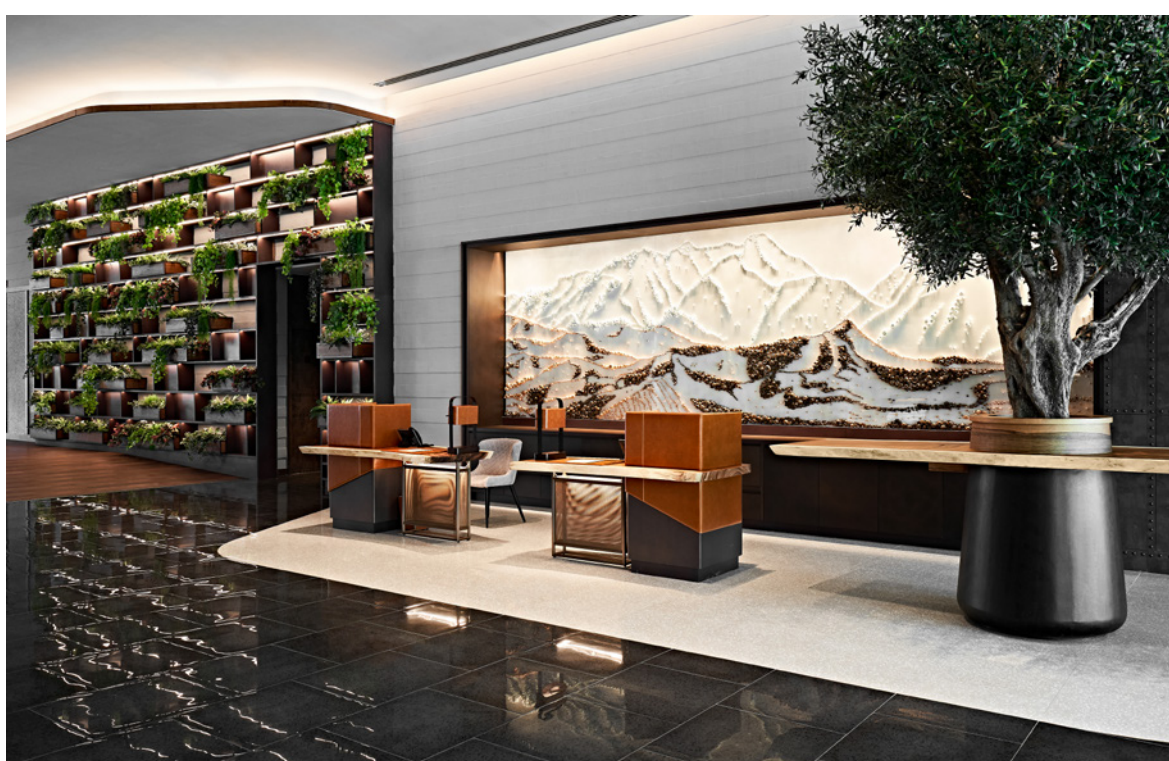
Dining and entertainment in Revier Dubai style

Meet your friends at The Lounge, an edgy meeting space on the ground floor of the hotel. With a host of easy-to-consume munchables, coffees, Swiss chocolate drinks and more at the Café-Bar, The Lounge offers a cool space to work from or socialise with others in a hyper-relaxed atmosphere.

Alphorn, open all day, offers a casual dining experience in a contemporary setting that brings the outside in, with views of the adjacent Business Bay District and of course, a sparkling pool for those looking to take a dip in their down time. From steaks to pasta dishes, burgers and signature Swiss desserts, Alphorn Restaurant offers an extensive international menu for those with a knack for good food and solid presentation, with compliments from the new resident Chef.

Allegra is soon to be the talk of Business Bay, with only the coolest Ladies night recently launched. Raise a glass to the good life with family, make it a






night with your girlfriends, or enjoy a night out of playful banter watching a game of your favourite sports, all over European dishes, finger foods and delectable sharing platters. A great night awaits you at Allegra, and if its Shisha you are a after, there's a hidden haven on site to award you the same!

Get out and get fit

With a fully equipped gym housing only the best-in-class fitness equipment, leaving your room to break a sweat is a breeze. There are simply no excuses as there is ample space and gear to help you maintain your fitness goals during your stay. The sparkling full-length pool makes for a perfect way to get a full body workout

in with a swim or if sheer relaxation is what you are after as you watch the buzz of Business Bay down below, that makes for a good option too!

Within easy reach of all things Dubai

Revier Dubai is easily accessible by car or metro and is a mere 5 minutes away from Business Bay La Perle, 10 minutes away from Dubai Mall, Dubai Opera, the magnificent Burj Khalifa and Dubai Fountain. The luxury lifestyle destinations Palm Jumeirah, Bluewater Island and Dubai Marina are a further 25 minutes away, with Dubai Creek and the Gold Souks a manageable 30 minutes in the opposite direction. Swiss inspired hospitality truly awaits you in the heart of Business Bay, where passion, connected and spirited adventure will usher you into moments of warm relaxation. 



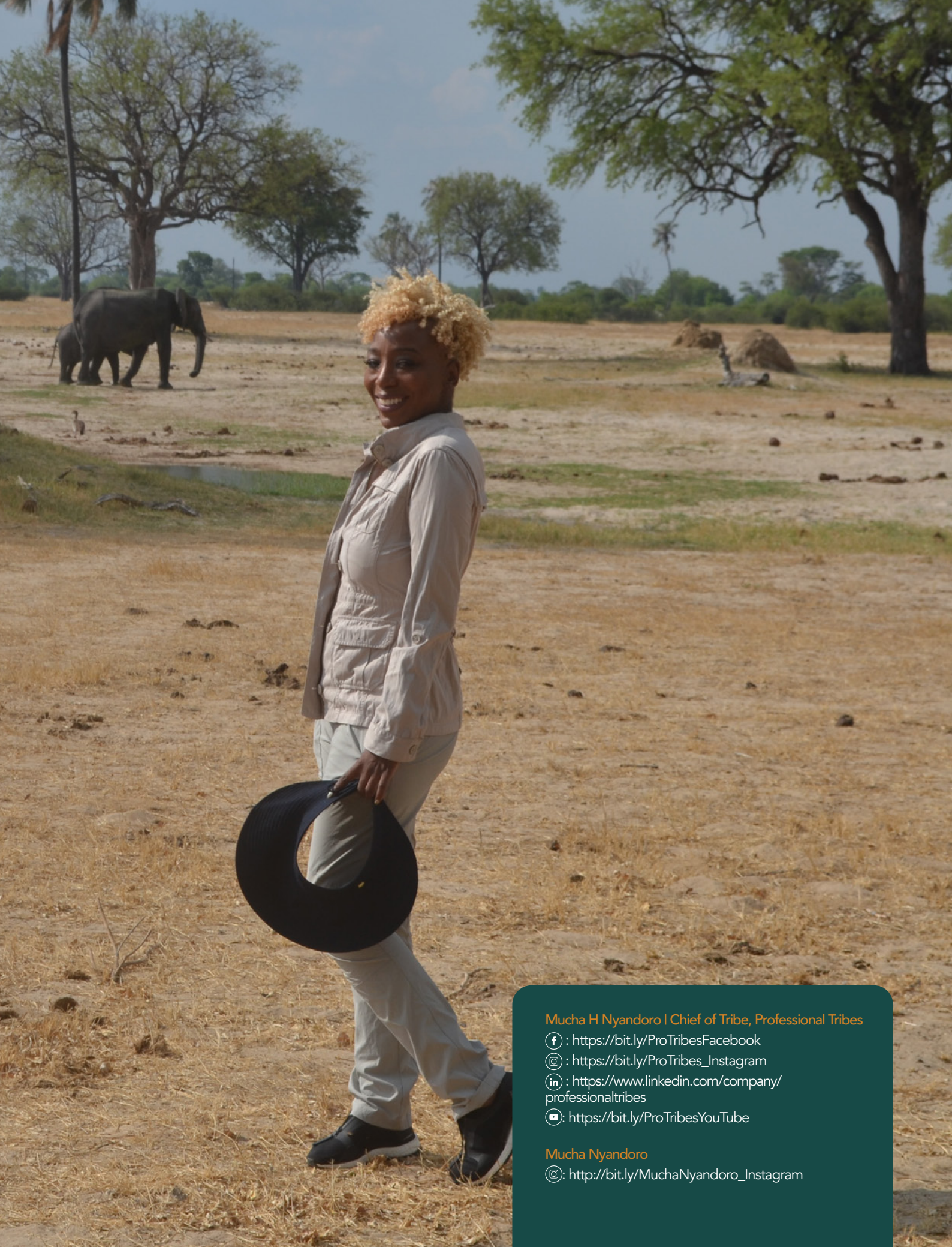


TASTE-MAKERS |



Dare To Claim The Planet Back

By Mucha Nyandoro



Mucha H Nyandoro | Chief of Tribe, Professional Tribes

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Rather than giving the global pandemic that is COVID any more power by referencing it in great detail, I will rather speak of the positives that have come from having to deal head-on with the uncertainty it has wrought on society in general, and the travel and tourism sector in particular.

If there is something we tend to learn only when we are ejected from our comfort zones, is that we take too much in this life for granted. Consider that mass-market commercial air travel only came into its own in the 1950s, less than a century ago, and in this relatively short space of time we have taken the privilege of navigating the globe as a right.

I have often peered out of aeroplane windows mid-flight and imagined the countless generations that never got to experience flying above the clouds and travelling to new destinations in relatively short periods of time. Now, with the state the world currently finds itself, we appreciate more what hassle-free travel entailed (I am going back to pre-9-11 with this reference), and how much it enriched our lives, deepened relationships with those based in multiple geographies and enabled in-person business interactions.

A Victoria Falls and Hwange experience to remember

And it is not only on the consumer side of things that we find a resurrected appreciation of travel and tourism. On a recent trip to Victoria Falls and Hwange, Zimbabwe, I was confronted by the genuine joy of staff across travel and tourism touchpoints who were totally thrilled to have guests in place again, and to cater to their every need.

The tourism sector tends to attract a higher proportion of people who sincerely love what they do, and when you add fully immersive experiences such as the management of game and safari lodges, that passion is amped all the way up to unbelievable levels. Destination tour managers smile more, waiters linger longer at their stations, and safari guides include additional details in their description of what lies in front of guests in the bush as they casually drop in diction laced with words such as crepuscular! Well done to Wilderness Safaris team for bringing game drives to life in a fun and refreshing way.

With my focus on all that represents Professional Tribes, I must commend Matetsi Victoria Falls' management for committing to staff that despite the challenges of the ongoing circumstances, they would retain their jobs. There would have to be imaginative approaches to staff rosters and responsibilities, but no one was going to be let go for circumstances far beyond their own control. What a statement of intent to make.

Why experiential travel matters

In busy, complex lives, it really is too easy to lose sight of the things that genuinely matter. Sitting in a boma and watching sparks from the wood fire ascend into the

night sky, gazing up at infinite stars and contemplating the meaning of existence, listening to the wild calls from nature just outside your camp at the break of dawn, or trying to sleep to the sound of a stalking animal that turns out to be a lion, are life affirming endeavours no one ought to take for granted.

We are at a tipping point, where as the dominant species on the planet, we can make a choice to live more considered, fulfilling lives, or continue to chase our own tails with little appreciation of the dire repercussions of our actions. Too many gifts from nature are being destroyed, wasted, or marginalised by our pre-occupation with industrialisation and development for its own sake.

Doing better for nature

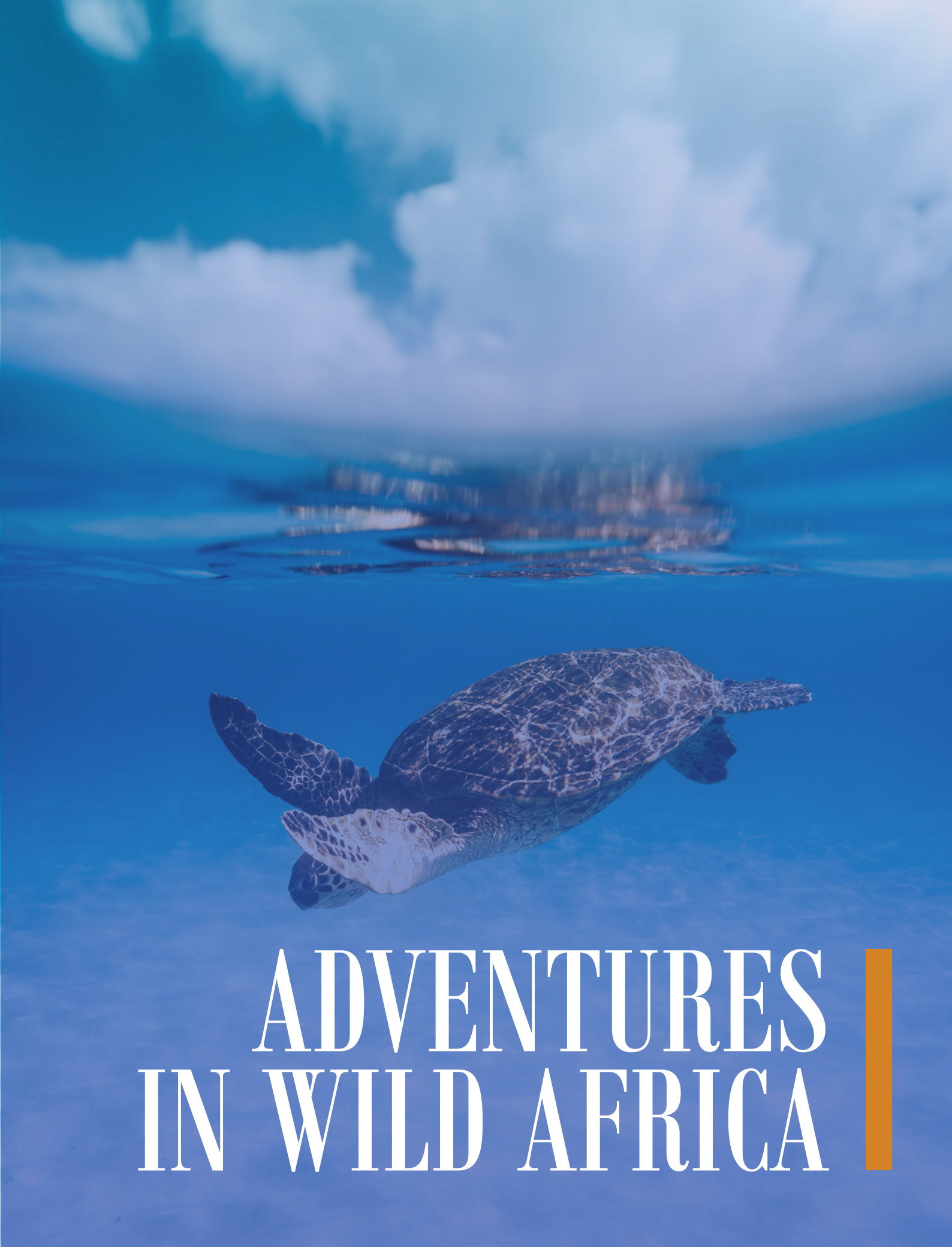
Outcomes from the COP26 climate change conference held in Glasgow in November were muted at best, widely considered to have not gone far enough in helping avert the looming disaster that is forecast to come forth with global warming. Research released during the conference shows that the plans countries have laid out so far for reducing emissions (known as Nationally Determined Contributions) still add up to a terrifying 2.4C of temperature rise by the end of the century. This figure is meant to be managed at 1.5C.

And so, as the highly industrialised nations of the world continue to operate in ways that harm the entire planet, the travel and tourism industry, whose survival is related directly to the preservation of natural and other wonders, are left to consider their future against a backdrop of compounding negative factors.

At this tipping point, I choose to be re-inspired and reinvigorated into highlighting and celebrating the beauty that abounds all around, which is however also fragile and in need of protection and conservation. I choose to take no aspect of this life and the wonderful, layered experiences it throws up for granted. The pandemic has shown us our own fragility as a species as well as our commonality, and if these twin factors do not galvanise us to aspire to new heights and do better with the resources we are blessed with, then nothing will.

The year 2022 remains an unknown quantity, though what is sure is that there will be strong forces looking to maintain and return to the status quo of old as soon as possible, and others, like myself, will be agitating for sustainable change and the turning of a corner. In just the same way that generations a century ago could not fathom the speed and reach of exploration today, similarly I hope that generations a century from now will be able to enjoy richer experiences because we safeguarded them, and not poorer ones because we squandered them.

I struggle to find a more apt quotation to frame the current times and the quiet optimism I hold for the future of this beautiful planet of ours than the ending of Max Erhmann's *Desiderata*: "With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy."^{AM}



ADVENTURES IN WILD AFRICA



DISCOVER LOISABA WITH THE ELEWANA COLLECTION

The Elewana Collection easily boasts the largest footprint in East Africa, with 16 lodges, camps, and hotels in 11 iconic locations from the semi-arid landscape of the northern properties in Meru, Loisaba and Lewa. The rolling savannahs of the Masai Mara and of course the endless plains of Amboseli with the dramatic backdrop of Mt. Kilimanjaro, each has its own unique charm that will leave you in awe of your surroundings.

In Tanzania the tranquillity of Arusha to the dramatic highlands of Ngorongoro Crater, the vast expanse of the Serengeti plains and the undulating valleys and swamps of Tarangire with impressive baobab trees that dominate the landscape, all contrast the stunning coastline at either Diani or Zanzibar, offering a different beauty with swaying palm trees, white sandy beaches and crystal blue waters of the Indian Ocean that mesmerise the senses.





Kenya is renowned for delivering the quintessential safari experience, and the iconic locations of Elewana Collection's 10 properties enables guests to enjoy the country's vast and diverse ecosystems by showcasing the very best that this incredible destination has to offer.

Unpacking Loisaba

The lesser known Loisaba Conservancy is an exemplar of cutting-edge conservation on the wild Laikipia Plateau, North of Kenya. Already a very special safari destination, the 57,000-acre conservancy is home to only three luxury Elewana Collection camps offering an ultra-private and exclusive experience. Loisaba has ravishing views stretching to Mt Kenya and a rich abundance of animals – Laikipia is one of only a few places in Africa where wildlife numbers are actually on the rise; everything from the Big Five, rare melanistic leopard to rare wild dog might be spotted.

It also offers an exciting array of different ways of experiencing the wilderness, from game drives and bush walks to camel rides, mountain-biking, horse trekking and Samburu guided runs. Loisaba will revive your mind, rejuvenate your body, and revitalize your soul. Each with its unique style and charm but common customary warm African hospitality, the Elewana Collection camps in Loisaba are truly magical and

will ensure your experience is not only big on game but big on glamour too.

Loisaba Tented Camp

Perched on the edge of an escarpment, Loisaba Tented Camp is designed to capitalize on unhindered views across Laikipia's mottled landscape all the way to Mt Kenya. All accommodations and main areas enjoy a breath-taking vantage point over an expansive panorama. African-themed sophistication and style is the flavour of Loisaba Tented Camp. Spacious and airy tents are custom-built with large floor-to-ceiling doors and windows, high ceilings and polished wood floors. The tent suites are adorned in chic Africana furniture with a modern European twist.

Loisaba Star Beds

The ultimate night's sleep? It's tough to imagine anywhere more magical to drift off than Loisaba Star Beds. Poised on a rocky kopje, the Loisaba Star Beds command sweeping views over an undulating valley. Handcrafted four-poster wooden beds sit on raised wooden platforms jutting out from a thatched-roof accommodation and are rolled out each night



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for guests to enjoy the most memorable sleep under the endless African sky. Rustically designed to complement the surrounding environment, each star bed is individually built in harmony with the natural rocky features, incorporating a sitting area, and open plan bathroom with a view.

Loisaba Lodo Springs

The newest addition to the portfolio, Loisaba Lodo Springs is set on an escarpment with impressive views that reach across the magical landscape of northern Kenya from almost any point in the lodge. Designed to pay tribute to old safari ways; an eclectic mix of hand restored antique and vintage pieces enhance the backdrop of modern and contemporary architectural design with décor that features 17th century French walnut wardrobes, up-cycled cedar fence posts used as panelling and 1950's Americana parlour bar stools.

Offering an ultra-private experience, each of the eight spacious tented rooms boasts its own individual style with the colour scheme selected to represent the vintage Ghanaian Kente cloth that hangs above the master bed. Service being paramount, each tent is assigned an Elewana Guest Ambassador to serve and cater to every guest's need, as well as a dedicated safari vehicle and guide who will accompany guests for the duration of their stay.

Commitment to building communities and protecting nature


Revenue generated from conservancy fees and bed nights at Loisaba are dedicated to conservation of the 230km² private wilderness area, in addition to supporting community orientated health, education and enterprise programmes outside its boundaries with the neighbouring Samburu and Laikipia Maasai tribes.

Together with its partners, The Nature Conservancy, San Diego Zoo, Space for Giants and Elewana Collection, the Loisaba Conservancy's mission is to protect and enhance critical wildlife diversity, abundance, and habitat in the Loisaba landscape, which sits on the western edge of one of Kenya's most important elephant movement corridors, while concurrently supporting sustainable livestock production and improving the lives of neighbouring communities.

The Land & Life Foundation, Elewana Collection's charity arm, is a commitment to responsible tourism, ensuring future generations can enjoy the wonders of Africa and safari

adventure. Land & Life believes that the sustainability of East Africa's wildlife and habitats depends on these key actions:

1. **securing land for conservation, protecting species and their environment,**
2. **providing tangible benefits to the people who live alongside wildlife, and**
3. **educating the next generation of conservationists.**

Land & Life achieves this through four core programs - WildLife Warrior Program, School Support, Medical Support and Nature Conservation Program. 





A *Stargazing* Desert Safari In Namibia Unlike Any Other

Home to one of only six International Dark Sky Reserves in the world, Namibia's clear desert skies offer travelers an otherworldly stargazing experience. Award-winning luxury travel company Ker & Downey® Africa has a longstanding reputation for curating, unique expeditions throughout the African continent, and ultra-luxurious 12-day Stargazing Desert Safari in Namibia is no exception.



To book your stargazing safari to Namibia, visit ker-downeyafrica.com to find out more.

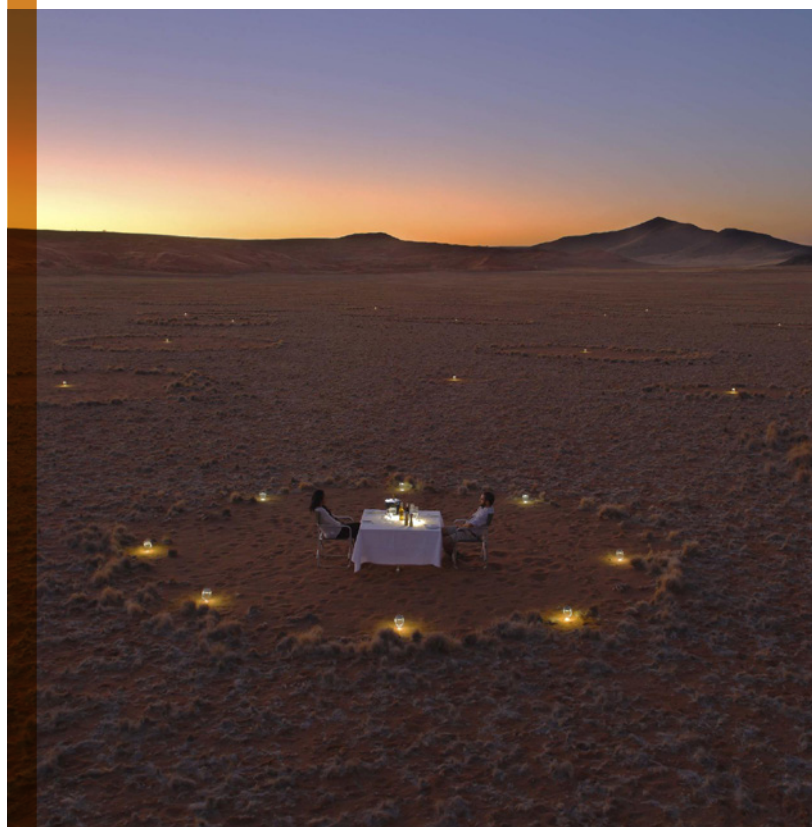


"Namibia is an enigmatic country of contrasts, vast open spaces and breath-taking scenery. It is a great safari destination for an adventurous traveler who has visited Africa before, or honeymooners looking for a romantic escape away from the crowds," says Lisa Nel, Group Head of Product and Marketing at Ker & Downey® Africa.

The private fly-in itinerary combines thrilling wildlife encounters and desert adventure with carefully selected luxury lodges that are guaranteed to maximize guests' celestial safari experience. And to top it off, Ker & Downey® Africa have lined up some incredible experiences like stargazing alongside astronomers in state-of-the-art observatories, an open-air desert cinema experience, and a night atop a custom-built Land Cruiser in Namibia's pristine wilderness.

AN UNSURPASSED ENCOUNTER WITH THE OUTDOORS BY DAY AND NIGHT AWAITS YOU...

Guests will visit five breathtaking destinations by private charter flights including Zannier Private Reserve, Onguma Game Reserve, Damaraland, Sossusvlei, and the ancient Namib Desert. The



experience begins at the ultra-luxurious Omaanda in Zannier Reserve where guests can enjoy a perfectly tailored safari experience to match their interests. With a focus on conservation, guests can experience rhino, elephant and big cat tracking as well as visit the resident meerkat clan at sunrise to witness their fascinating antics in the wild.

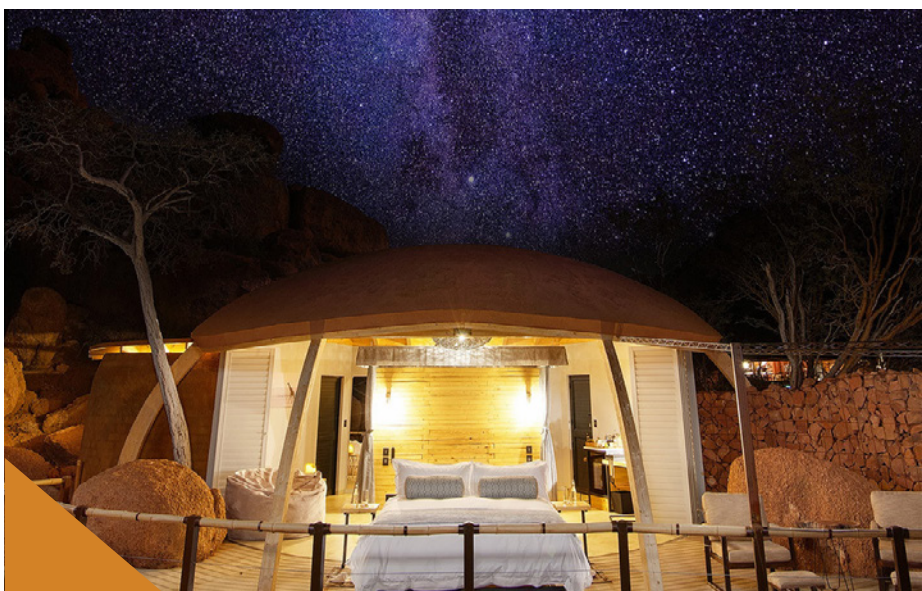
The journey continues at Onguma The Fort in Namibia's premier safari destination, Etosha National Park. Guests can look forward to day and night safaris, as well as a unique sleepout experience on Onguma's very own Dream Cruiser – a custom-built Land Cruiser with two levels that sleeps two people. This one-of-a-kind experience invites guests to spend a romantic night in the wilderness under the extraordinary Namibian night sky.

Next up, guests will fly to Damaraland – a region renowned for its impressive rock formations, ancient river terraces and desert-adapted wildlife – and check in to Onduli Ridge. Hidden amongst granite boulders, this luxury camp features roll-out star beds where guests can drift off under a blanket of stars on their own private deck.

The next stop is Sossusvlei – home to some of the tallest sand dunes and dramatic desert landscapes in the world. Sossusvlei Desert Lodge is set against the backdrop of Sossusvlei Private Desert Reserve and offers guests a secluded retreat on the border of an International Dark Sky Reserve, so you are guaranteed a stargazing extravaganza. The lodge features a world-class Observatory, complete with a Celestron CPC 1100 GPS computerized telescope where guests can discover Namibia's night sky alongside the lodge's resident astronomer.

The final leg of this journey takes guests to the southernmost part of the ancient Namib Desert to the exclusive Sonop camp. Here guests can enjoy morning and sunset nature drives, unique horse-riding excursions in the desert, and expertly guided desert walks. When the night sky is at its most dazzling, guests can visit the camp's observation deck for a stargazing experience par excellence or snuggle up on a lounge chair at the camp's open-air cinema.

Pricing for the 12-day Stargazing Desert Safari in Namibia starts from \$12,019 per person sharing and is available year-round. Worth every penny, it truly is one such experience that will forever be etched in the memories of those who embark on it! 🌌





SAVING ZANZIBAR'S TURTLE POPULATION

By Daphine Mabhiza

Zanzibar, an island getaway off the East African coast of Tanzania is well recognized for its pristine beaches, unique heritage sites that journey one into the trade posts of yesteryear, fine cuisine of varied influences and wellness opportunities to reconnect one with self. This tranquil destination offers is widely viewed as the perfect place for one to disconnect from the hustle and bustle of their everyday lives, allowing you to immerse yourself in absolute relaxation.

A big part of the holiday experience in Zanzibar is scuba diving and marine tourism where tourists

enjoy the wonder of life beneath the sea, with turtle species being a big part of the underwater ecosystem. However, over the years, turtle numbers have dwindled greatly. Turtles were once a big attraction in the waters of the Indian Ocean for the scuba divers to marvel at, but today they are in danger of reducing to near extinction, with the threat of turtle hunting for meat, shell, and eggs shells which locals then use to create trinkets sold to tourists. Turtle poaching has over the years grown rapidly, and even still, turtles also tend to get caught in the local fishermen's nets, causing injuries to their delicate bodies under their shells.

Protecting Zanzibar's turtles

Conservation strategies have, in response to the challenges affecting Zanzibar's marine life, been put in place, and are going a long way to also help save the island's turtles. Turtle poaching is now an illegal practice punishable by law, and community efforts such as Nungwi Turtle Rescue and Scuba Do Zanzibar have played an integral part in improving the health and numbers of the turtles.

The Nungwi Turtle Rescue Facility

is a home-grown community project that helps rehabilitate turtles by buying them from fishermen who find the creatures stuck in their fishnets or injured at sea. The sanctuary nourishes them back to health before releasing them into their natural habitat. This rescue facility has become popular with tourists as it allows them to swim and interact with the turtles, charging a small fee for this unique experience, and thus making it one of the most visited attractions on the island.

Revenues generated contribute towards funding the facility as well as medical treatment for injured turtles. The sanctuary also takes care of baby turtles from the moment they hatch, helping them grow strong enough before they are released into the ocean. Working together with Nungwi Turtle Rescue is Scuba Do Zanzibar, a rescue-focused project that also aids turtles caught in fishing nets, treating, and even resuscitating any non-breathing turtles. Some hotels and resorts have also made positive strides with turtle rescue as they donate some of their profits to sanctuaries, with contributions being key to the development of initiatives designed to help save turtles.

Sustainable tourism is of growing concern to tourism players on the island, such that they work to create and promote initiatives that



not only help preserve turtles and the greater marine species, but members of the community too. It is commonplace for local women to host craft making lessons or artisans to handmake curios and wares which are then sold to tourists visiting Zanzibar, thereby supporting the socio-economic wellbeing of Zanzibari communities and the people that call the island home.

A part to play in helping save turtles

The turtle species remain endangered by adverse fishing practices, human negligence when interacting with marine habitats, pollution and more. Being a tourist in Zanzibar awards one not only the opportunity to marvel at the wonder of nature while enjoying pristine beaches, but also to learn about environmentally conscious ways to help locals protect turtle species. You may be asking yourself what you can do to help save Zanzibar's turtles when next you visit this magical destination. There is a lot you can do, but you can start off with these few to help make a difference:


1. **Keep lights off in beach areas renowned for nesting.** Turtle hatchlings rely on moonlight and its reflection to make their way to the water during the night. Artificial light from beachfront buildings has proven to discourage females from nesting on the beach, and also confuses hatchlings, redirecting them inland

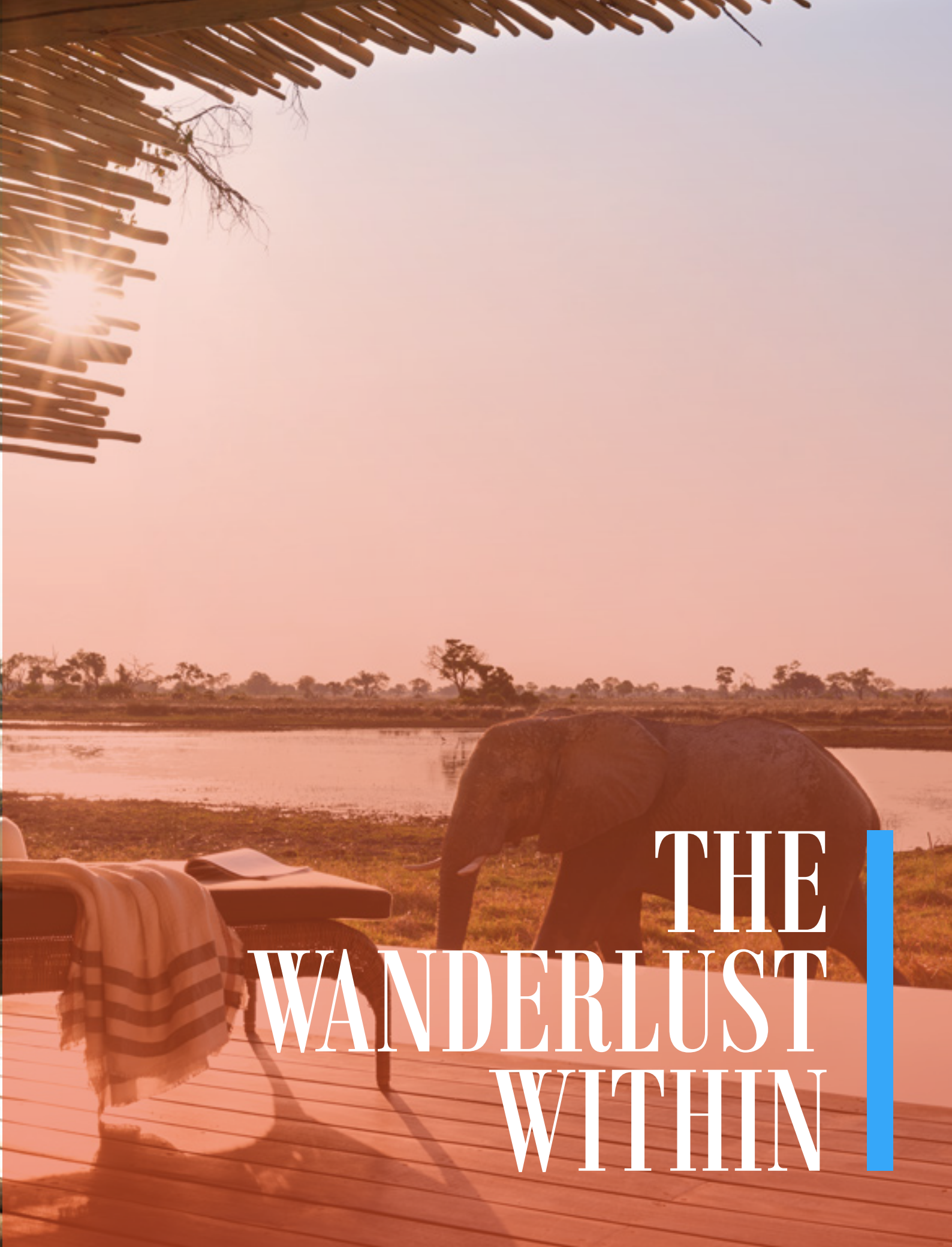


as opposed to towards the sea. Because they are most vulnerable in the early stages of their lives, heading inland can result in serious injury or even death. So, during those late night strolls on the beach, or if you are so fortunate to be staying at a beach side villa, dim your lights or turn them off completely. You never know whether there is a female nesting or turtles hatching not too far off.

2. **Keep beaches free of garbage and debris.** Sea turtles often find become tangled in plastic and debris on land and in water, with items discarded by humans such as old fishing lines, balloons and plastic bags being mistakenly consumed by turtles. Say no to plastic and do your part to leave the beaches clean.
3. **Be conscious of nesting areas.** Hatching turtles can be remarkable

to watch, however human interruption disturbs hatchlings from making their way to sea, or even female turtles coming in from sea to find a place to nest. Known nesting areas must be marked and protected to give these marine creatures a chance at completing one of their most important life processes. As a tourist, you can do your part to advocate for the same.

4. **Avoid pollution through chemical use.** Toxic chemicals we use eventually end up at sea, killing coastal plants and marine life. Nowadays there are a wide range of environmentally friendly alternatives to use, which goes a long way to protect our marine life. Try them.
5. **Don't buy souvenirs made from turtle shells.** Need we say more?
6. **Only purchase responsibly caught seafood.** We all love a great plate of seafood, but do we know how it was caught? Sea turtles are most vulnerable to commercial fishing methods and usually wind up as bycatch from fishing methods such as trawling and longlines, eventually being injured before being tossed back to sea or thrown away altogether.
7. **Learn more about turtles and their habitats during your next visit.** There is no better way to learn about protecting nature and marine life without visiting a turtle rehabilitation center or joining a tour that touches on conservation. When next on your holiday, simply book your environmentally conscious activity and learn more about how you can protect sea life and their natural habitats. 



THE WANDERLUST WITHIN



Desert glamping anyone?

6 Reasons Why You Should Experience Sharjah's Moon Retreat By Mysk

By Yvonne C Mtengwa





Who doesn't enjoy a perfect escape from the big city life and

all the speed that comes with it? After many months of what now feel like restrictions and hinderances as triggered by the pandemic, one thing that stood out for me over the past year was the innate ability we all possess to find solutions to overcoming life's roadblocks. We all have that one thing we turn to in a bid to recalibrate our minds or call "time-out", and for me, the simple notion of movement, be it from the desk in my home office to a coffee shop, or driving out of the city overnight for a change of scenery, has done wonders in awarding me opportunities to bask in the spirit of gratitude. And so, when I received an invitation to head out into Sharjah Emirate to experience a unique glamping experience in the desert, I had to oblige. This short 50-minute drive from the hustle and bustle of Dubai turned out to be that first encounter with the outdoors for 2022, that I didn't know I needed, and here are my 6 reasons why....

1. THE COOLEST LITTLE DOMES TO SLEEP IN AWAIT YOU.

Moon Retreat boasts a total of ten well-appointed, luxuriously decorated domes, set on a winding path up an incline in Sharjah's desert. A stunning rocky cliff serves as the backdrop, and imposing reminder that you really are in the desert and far from the madding crowd. Three domes are without pools while the other seven avail you your own private opportunity to enjoy the ultimate seclusion as you take your swim.

2. BIGGER TENTS FOR BIGGER GROUPS. The domes are cosy and can only accommodate two people, but should you be





thinking to go glamping with family or friends and need more room, there are two one-bedroom tents and four two-bedroom tents to pick from, the larger of which also has a private pool to enjoy.

3. IT'S GLAMPING SO YOU GET TO DO THE COOKING YOUR-SELF! You'll love that there is an option for the resident chef to whip up a meal for you, but if you are bent on roughing it without having to rub sticks and stones together to start your fire or go catching your dinner at a nearby stream, you'll be delighted to note that each dome and tent is equipped with a state-of-the-art gas fuelled barbeque station to make your breakfast or dinner from.

"Well, that about the food?" may be your next question. Before check-in, you will receive a menu via email or text for you to place your order for raw foods that will make up your meal. From Arabic mix grills and burgers for dinner to ingredients for your vegetable omelettes, your cold meats and those set aside for you to cook, a full bag of groceries including cereals, fresh fruit, sweets, a variety of breads and already prepped vegetables and condiments are delivered to your doorstep in environmentally friendly bags. Enjoy good conversation with your loved ones as you take in the pristine surroundings and aroma from the grill! Once done with preparing and enjoying your meal, the friendly staff will come collect your refuse bags and replenish the dry goods that come with your dome's coffee making station.

4. IF IT'S A RETREAT YOU'RE AFTER, YOU'LL ENJOY THE SILENT SERVICE.

The whole time we were there, we rarely saw any neighbours or the welcoming team that ensured a stellar service during our stay. It was super quiet, and perfect from the everyday noise that comes with being a big city dweller. Oh, and WIFI is only available at main camp, giving you that reason to truly disconnect to reconnect.

5. EXPLORE MLEIHA FOSSIL ROCK AND THE DESERT BY DAY.

The plains are rugged and uninterrupted, framed by the Al Faya Mountains and perfect for a little adventure on wheels. We took a drive out following the unmarked trail into the



desert and even stopped for a little song and dance as we appreciated the serenity of our environment. There is definitely great scope to walk around the quaint camp and find some little Instagrammable spots that contrast the orange sand and bright blue skies. Whatever you kick for adventure is, you get to choose your pace.

6. FAR ENOUGH TO FEEL LIKE A RETREAT, NEAR ENOUGH TO GET TO EASILY. I quite literally came from meetings in DIFC and found myself making the turn off from the highway within the hour. Moon Retreat by Mysk is located 68km from Sharjah, 61 kms from Dubai, 176 kms (1 hour 50 minutes) from Abu Dhabi. Nearby attractions include Mleiha Archeological Centre which is a mere 15 minutes away. Easy to get to with a convenient road network, my only advice would be to leave the city fast enough to where you won't spend two hours stuck between haulage

trucks and other drivers leaving for their weekend getaway.

The retreat offers limited on-site services as guests are required to self-cater. A hosting team is always however present on site, making them a quick call away for urgent services and supplies if needed.

But there is still much you can get up to between the stretches of relaxation, including yoga at sunrise, a visit to the nearby Archeological Centre, salt spa at Al Faya Retreat, a sister property to Moon Retreat, leisurely lunch on or off-site, a trek or dune bashing, and horse riding or visiting a camel farm are all just possibilities by day that can be arranged by the guest services team. Just venture out to Sharjah with this in mind; a stay at Moon Retreat by Mysk is designed to reinvigorate any adventurer's love for the vast expanse of the desert, embracing quiet moments to recalibrate in unfiltered nature. 🌙



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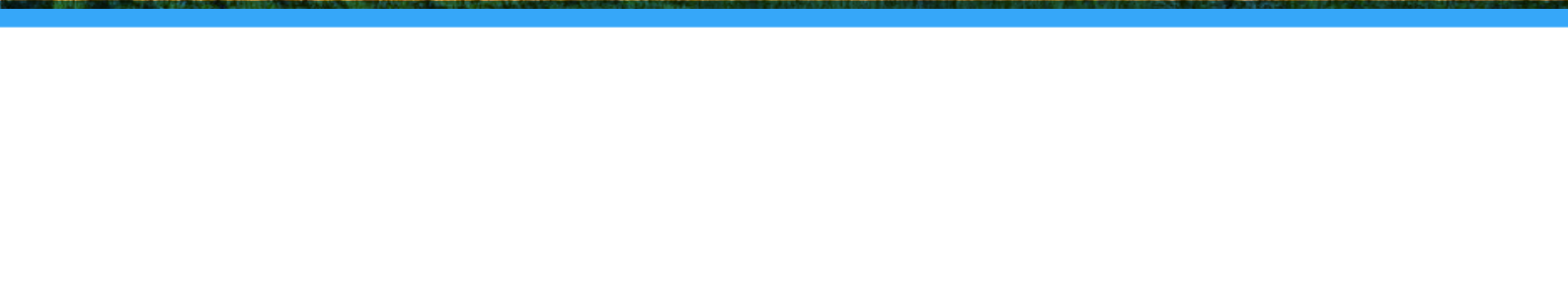
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Belmond Offers a New Way to Experience the *Okavango Delta*

Belmond Eagle Island Lodge, a luxury safari lodge in the heart of Botswana's Okavango Delta, offers a helicopter and horseback safari, combining an aerial safari by private helicopter with a horse-ride through one of the world's last true remaining wildernesses.







The Okavango Delta, teeming with some of southern Africa's most prolific wildlife species, awaits your exploration. To learn more about how you can explore this breathtaking wonder by helicopter or horseback, contact Belmond Safaris reservations on safaris@belmond.com.

The magical excursion offers a new way to explore the UNESCO world heritage site and its magnificent inhabitants, awarding adventurers a unique sky and earth safari which begins at dawn as the open-sided helicopter safari takes flight, offering uninterrupted aerial views across the delta. Guests can enjoy aerial views of the game rich landscape which is abundant with roaming elephants, buffalo, giraffe, and zebra as the sun rises and the wildlife begins a new day in the oasis of the Okavango Delta.


Following the helicopter flight, the safari continues on horse-back accompanied by a specialised guide who will give a safety briefing before leading a trail through the bush, traversing palm-lined islands, grassy flood plains, mopane forests and clear streams.

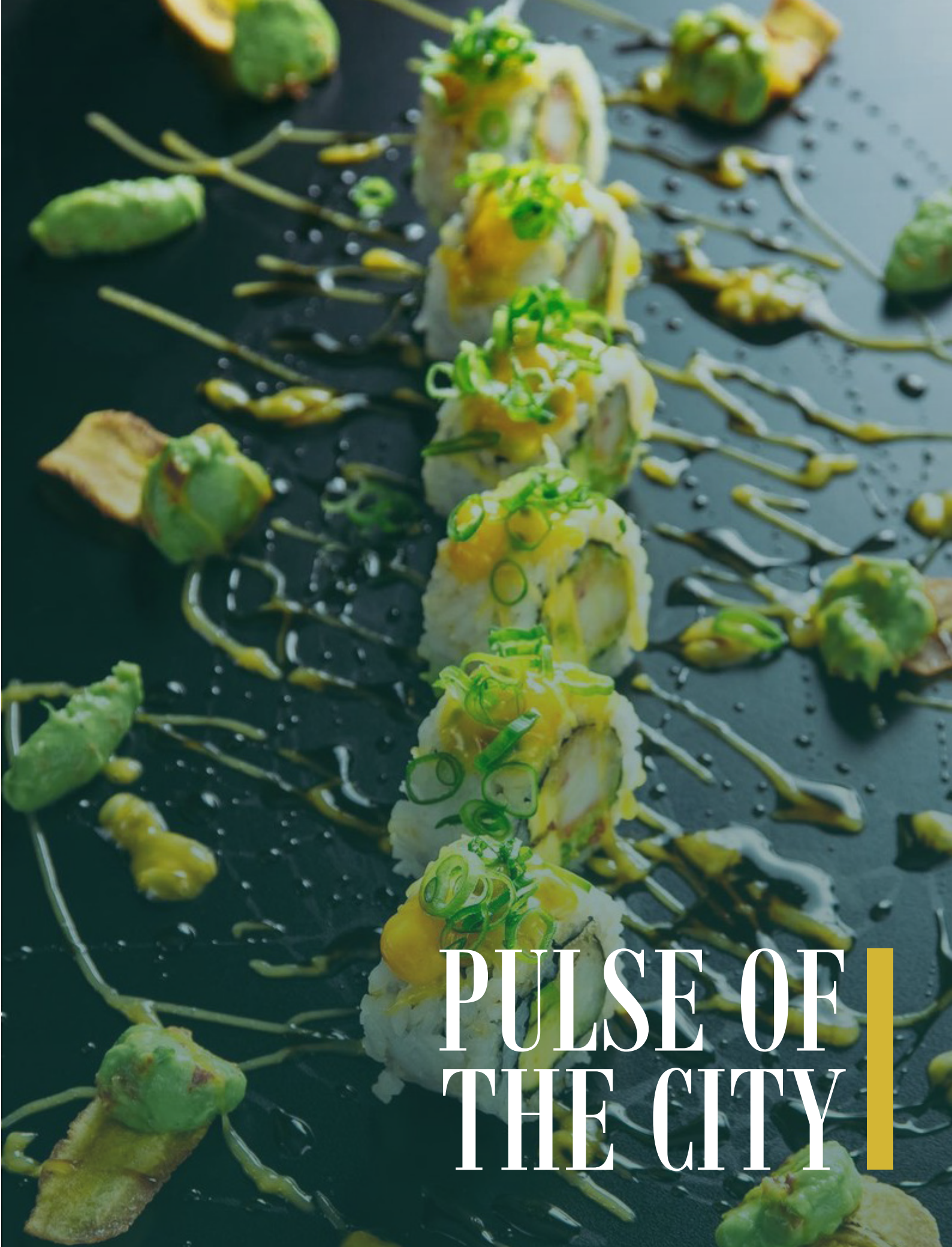
The intimate half-day or a full day experience gives even returning safari-lovers something new to discover, as guests will have the opportunity to get close to game which may otherwise be hidden from sight. Moving silently on the horses, riders are able to be at one with the wildlife around them and to observe game entirely undisturbed. Guests can move with animals during their daily migrations



and follow them on their journey, unhindered by river crossings and difficult terrain that would rule out a game drive vehicle.

Visitors could be so lucky as to ride alongside wild dogs on a hunt, elephants as they meander through the river systems, or follow herds of buffalo. The reserve is also home to notoriously private species such as leopard, African wildcat, and honey badgers, as well as smaller creatures like the warthog and tortoise which before now may go unspotted, concealed in the undergrowth.

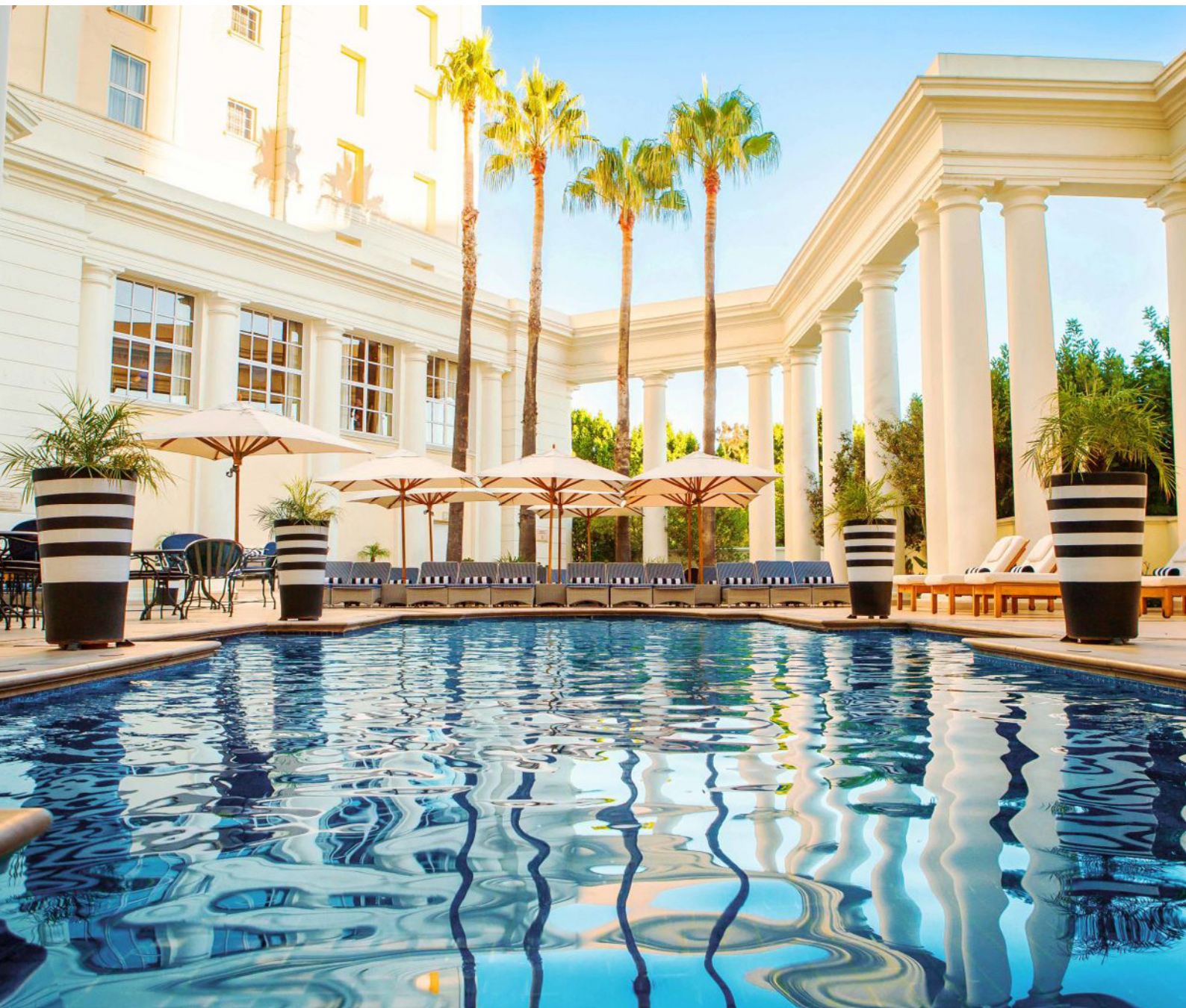
To book the safari experience, guests must have a mastery of the basic horse-riding skills, as well as an ability to trot for stretches of ten minutes at a time, to be comfortable at all paces and to be able to gallop. The minimum age requirement for the safari is 12 years old and persons under 18 years old must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The horses are all full or part thoroughbreds and range from full or part thoroughbreds, Botswana Warm bloods, Pure Arab, Anglo Arab to Friesian Crosses. 



PULSE OF THE CITY



Classic Hospitality At Cape Town's Landmark Southern Sun The Cullinan



Enter the revolving doors of the Southern Sun The Cullinan, a premier hospitality destination with 1 Cullinan Street sited as its address, offering grand hotel accommodation in the heart of Cape Town just moments from the Waterfront. Located in one of Cape Town's most sought-after areas, a short walk from the renowned Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, the Cape Town International Convention Centre, Long Street and other popular landmarks, Southern Sun The Cullinan makes for a stellar choice in accommodations, particularly for those who value being on the cusp of activity and connectivity.

Hosting a wide range of venue spaces for every type of occasions, and 394 superbly appointed en-suite rooms to choose from, each tastefully furnished and designed for maximum comfort, the property is classically styled and indulgent, with contempo-



rary emphasis in design.

Make no mistake, as imposing as the cream coloured building is on the outside, the landmark Southern Sun The Cullinan's classical architecture is also reflected throughout the hotel, with high ceilings, a balconied mezzanine level, and soaring columns around the pool area.

A destination of indulgence

Guests enjoy access to a host of services and amenities, including the large outdoor heated pool with its spacious deck, a fully equipped fitness centre, conference facilities, great dining at The Peach Tree ReBastaurant, light meals and delicious cocktails at Stella Café & Bar. With convenient accessibility to nearby top attractions such as Table Mountain, Cape Town Stadium, Robben Island Award-winning cuisine served by leading chefs, a plethora of additional opportunities for dining and retail therapy and a stunning view of the bustling harbour, a stay at Southern Sun The Cullinan is a guaranteed experience of the cosmopolitan nature of the Mother City, one famed for its uncontested balance between abounding nature, and the modern appeal of a metropolitan city.

Grand space for a grand event

Offering a choice of 9 conference facilities suitable for a variety of events, the venues can be configured to host a range of occasions like intimate boardroom meetings,

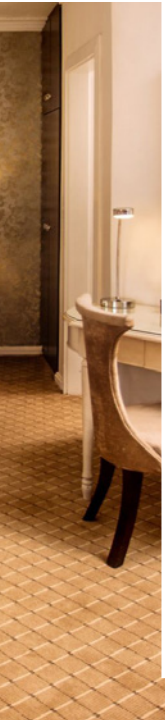
cocktail functions, workshops, seminars, training sessions, conferences as well as product launches. A knowledgeable and professional banqueting team is available to assist in planning the perfect function, complete with specialised menus and décor to add a bit of flare.

In and around the hotel

Southern Sun The Cullinan awards guests convenience and access to a host of amenities, including a beauty salon and hairdressers, nearby shopping malls, casino, theatre, library and an indoor heated pool. But there is more. For those with a knack for heightened activity during their stay, they can choose from bowling greens, a games room with pool tables and arcade games, go golfing, mountain boarding or hiking, paintballing, go rowing or canoeing at on the Cape Town seaboard, or take on a game of tennis, squash or volleyball.

Boasting grand classical architecture, with imposing pillars that deliver a sense of majestic opulence as a welcome, this award-winning hotel envelops its guests in contemporary service and notable amenities to match in the heart of one of Cape Town's dining and entertainment districts. And so, should you find yourself in Cape Town and are looking for grand accommodations that offer stunning views of the hustle and bustle of the V & A Waterfront, then Southern Sun The Cullinan is where your booking belongs! 🍷





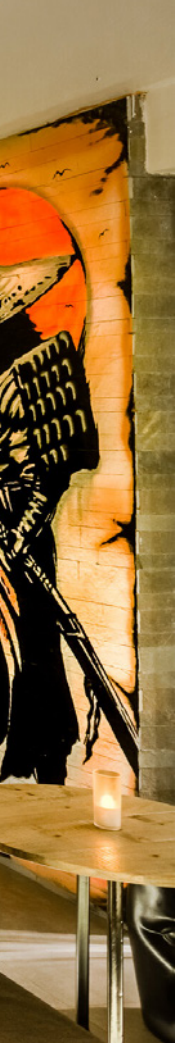


Creativity Reimagined At The Trademark Hotel

Nestled within the leafy suburbs of fast growing Nairobi is the Trademark Hotel, an urban chic 215-roomed business hotel inspired by the cultural and creative renaissance of the Kenyan capital. It's comfortable, it's convenient and serves up access to a wide variety of dining and entertainment options for the upwardly mobile and creatively inspired guest.

By Yvonne C Mtengwa

People watching from a lobby of a hotel in a new city will tell you plenty about a people and the locale, and so true to form; this was going to be my experience at the Trademark Hotel, located adjacent to the Village Market in Gigiri. My check in was just after lunch time, and so there was a buzz of activity from a combination of other guests enjoying casual chatter in the eclectic seating areas that form the open-spaced lobby area, coupled with others that were visiting the premise, perhaps for an afternoon of roof-top drinks, meetings, or a hearty lunch at any one of the onsite restaurants.



WELCOMING AMBIENCE

Fine lines, earth tones and artwork stood out for me; plenty of African inspired art and a standout floor to ceiling bookshelf holding décor pieces and what seemed like hardback publications with pages packed with history. Upon check-in, I was guided to my room on the 6th floor, a Trademark King room designed with the business traveller in mind. Chic, yet minimalist, with a spacious working station, generous closet space, an open-to-room shower, standard coffee and tea amenities and views of the lively Village Market below, with plenty of greenery on the horizon. Because my stay was in every sense a working one, my room would make for solid productivity during the day and sound sleep by night.

TRADEMARK CULINARY IMMERSION

Its commonplace for me to opt for room service when I travel, largely because the time spent alone

when travelling alone, is often used to catch up with my tribe at home and churn out work-in-progress reports and things. The minimalist in-room design led me to believe that I was going to have limited options to choose from the in-dining menu. Selections turned out to be hearty, flavoursome, and plentiful, a treat when accompanied with a glass of wine at the end of a long day.

Downstairs, Harvest Restaurant delivered a full breakfast, characterized by fresh, crisp flavours and organic ingredients. The restaurant concept is designed to pay homage to Kenya's farming community, so the crates with cushions, extensive wood finishings, added earth tones and hard-to-miss wine cellar created the mood intended. My pick was always the same each morning – a piping hot cup of “Dhawa” – a Kenyan drink made from ginger, lemon, and honey, followed closely by my cappuccino fix, freshly made banana and strawberry crepes, a full English breakfast, and slices of fresh fruit.



A relaxed Sunday afternoon took me to Hero Restaurant on the 9th floor, a swanky eatery at the intersection of design, fantasy, indulgence, and individuality. The menu was reminiscent of a comic book, packed full of a plethora of mocktail, cocktail and small yet filling bite options. Built as a speakeasy, with a discreet entrance and prohibition-style bar, the space invites guest to an experience that is a celebration of jubilant fan-fare; a place where all members of the community come together to share whatever they are compelled to over sumptuous meals. Thought leaders, politicians, fashionistas, artists, and conservatives alike – will find their own spot of comfort at Hero, taking in the sounds unleashed by a resident DJ while sampling picks from the menu.

AROUND TRADEMARK HOTEL

Trademark Hotel is in fact located within East Africa’s largest shopping complex and recreating facility – Village Market, which boasts 250 retail and service outlets, 42

restaurants, a trampoline park, and a wealth of entertainment options for the entire family. Adjoining Village Market is Trademark Hotel’s sister property Tribe Hotel, a five-star boutique hotel that houses the award-winning Kaya Spa, Jiko Restaurant and Nest Rooftop Lounge and Martini Bar.

Conferencing facilities are plentiful at Trademark Hotel, with space and configurations to create the perfect ambience for any type of event, from baby and bridal showers, corporate seminars and workshops, weddings and more, comfortably accommodating up to 550 guests. The key word with Trademark Hotel event facilities is “innovation”, with the team going the extra mile to curate a truly dynamic yet uniquely minimalist experience, married with functionality, design and seamless integration.

A stay at Trademark Hotel also awards you the opportunity to earn loyalty points under the Marriott Bonvoy rewards program, granting you access to rewards at properties the world over through point exchanges. 





AFRICA TO THE WORLD

"MAURITIUS WAS MADE
FROM A PIECE OF HEAVEN;
AND THE WORLD WAS
COPIED FROM MAURITIUS"
MARK TWAIN

موريشيوس
هي قطعة من
الجنة على الأرض

مارك توين



DISCOVER THE MAURITIUS PAVILION AT EXPO 2020 DUBAI

For those that have pencilled in a trip to Expo 2020 Dubai in their diaries, a visit to the Mauritius Pavilion is unmissable. Located in the Opportunity District of Expo 2020, Mauritius Pavilion is a stone's throw away from the magnificent Al Wasl Plaza, and reflects the splendid beauty of the island of Mauritius. The pavilion is themed 'Roots of The Future', symbolic of the country's achievements today and how it is intertwined with its past.

The pavilion takes visitors on an interactive journey of the tropical paradise island of Mauritius with a textured seascape wall and forest, and its floor projections. Guests can learn more about the beautiful flora and fauna on the island including the country's national flower, the *Trochetia Boutoniana*, that grows on Le Morne Mountain (a world heritage site) and the different species of Ebony trees.

Visitors can spot life-size displays of endemic birds such as the Pink pigeon, the Echo parakeet, the Mauritius fody, the Mauritius kestrel, the majestic Paille-en-queue and the beloved Dodo, which was last sighted in 1662. With these features, the pavilion aims to educate visitors about the importance of environmental conservation.

The Mauritius Pavilion is divided into four zones, tied with mysteries riddles (sirandanns) that are woven across. The predominant colour of the pavilion is warm, bright, and inviting thus reflecting the Mauritian hospitality. The pavilion also highlights the emotional and historic connection that the country has with sugarcane cultivation.

ZONE 1: UNLOCKING ACCESS

Visitors will start their journey by experiencing the warm Mauritian culture introduced by a sirandann and a 'welcome' message in different languages. Visitors can unlock their access to the magical world through an interactive world map. Guests will then learn more about the exquisite landscape of Mauritius. Fun virtual reality surfing experiences are also located in this zone.

ZONE 2: REAPING THE REWARDS

The second zone is dominated by a bright ambiance representing peace, good governance, cultural diversity, and economic prosperity. This zone is a treat for the senses with a sweet smell and sounds of the waves and birds. Visitors will discover fruits and flowers of seven colours and will be invited to "reap the rewards". Representing the decades of hard work that has made Mauritius one of Africa's leading countries, these fruits are individually connected to a colourful optical fibre sprawled along the ceiling. At this zone, children can also watch a video about the extinct Dodo bird, along with observing its replica.


ZONE 3: THE HUB

The optic fibre symbolises the progressive and futuristic economy of Mauritius and merges in a central space called The Hub. This zone connects the branches to the roots, the future to the past and Mauritius to the African continent and the rest of the world.

Through an interactive experience across seven different stations, visitors will explore Mauritius' role as a hub for finance, education, logistics, information and communications technology (ICT) and other sectors that make Mauritius a diverse and prosperous economy.

ZONE 4: THE ROOTS OF THE FUTURE

This zone is an organic art installation of sugarcane plants, depicting "roots of the future". Each plant has a portrait of a Mauritian ancestor along with a story of their humble beginnings, stemmed in sugarcane agriculture. One of the plants carries a mirror where visitors can view their own reflection, serving a reminder that everyone is a root of the future, and is vital in creating a foundation for the next generation.

Before leaving the pavilion, guests can also enter an exciting competition to win a trip to Mauritius or buy authentic Mauritian products from the exhibition shop. 



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