

# ISLAND ECO-VENTURES

## SOUTH AFRICA & BOTSWANA PHOTOGRAPHY ADVENTURE With optional Cape Town Add-on AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2023

### Detailed Daily Itinerary

Day 1 – 3      Septemer 3 – 5, 2023      Arrive Johannesburg / Madikwe

Fly into Johannesburg (either from Cape Town or international). Transfer to the Federal Airlines lounge to wait for our flight to Madikwe Game Reserve (departs at 10am or 1pm). Depending on your flight arrival time, you may need to spend a pre-night in Johannesburg.

The Malaria-free Madikwe Game Reserve's location, close to the edge of the Kalahari Desert, ensures a truly diverse game-viewing experience. No self-drive visitors are allowed, and all drives are conducted by the private lodges dotted around the reserve. This makes for a very exclusive experience. From big cats to wild dogs, and from tiny dung beetles to mighty bull elephants, Madikwe Game Reserve is a nature photographer's dream. The reserve has it all: vast African landscapes, panoramic hilltop views and close-up animal encounters.



Upon arrival at Madikwe airport we'll be met and transferred to our lodge where we'll spend the next 3 nights.

Guests are luxuriously accommodated in custom treehouse-style suites, boasting magnificent views into the surrounding riverine forest, as well as glimpses across the famous Marico River. The Treehouse Suites blend effortlessly into the overarching canopy of lush foliage, making for fantastic birdwatching in a natural environment.

Upon arrival, guests are warmly welcomed at Jaci's Tree Lodge Main Lodge, which provides a cool retreat from the heat of African summer days and a cozy fireside sanctuary during chilly winter months.

Each of the 8 Treehouse suites at Jaci's Tree Lodge include:

- King / twin-bedded open-plan bedroom
- Large indoor bath
- Private outdoor shower
- Private viewing deck

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- Air-conditioner and ceiling fan
- Eco-friendly Afriearth amenities
- Twice-daily game drives, including sunset / sunrise stops and night drives
- All meals daily
- Select local house drinks including a variety of fine South African wines, spirits, beers and non-alcoholic beverages (Terms & Conditions apply)
- Local and specialized teas and fabulous filter coffee
- Traditional fireside dining as often as possible
- Access to our submerged Terrapin Hide and Tlou Deck
- Sleep out under the stars at Naledi Treehouse, complete with private KolKol hot tub and outdoor shower (Additional costs apply)
- Access to Jaci's Tree Lodge Main Lodge
- Access to Jaci's Tree Lodge swimming pool



## GAME DRIVES

This afternoon we'll enjoy our first game drive, along with our private photography guide. Photographic safaris present guests to Madikwe Game Reserve with a rare unique opportunity to discover those perspectives with the help of expert guides who have been trained to drive specifically with photographers' requirements in mind, positioning the vehicle for the perfect shot.

The lodge also offers customized safari game drive vehicles, which have been equipped specially for photography with gimbals, camera mountings and removable roofs.



Game drives are undertaken in the early mornings and late afternoons. This increases the chances of seeing animals out and about, as they prefer to avoid the midday heat; and it also means that you're photographing during the "Golden Hour", when the light is best for photography and the sun bathes the sweeping plains in a golden light.

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## SAFARI WALKS

Besides morning and afternoon game drives, the lodge also offers Safari Walks where, accompanied by an expert walking-trails guide, you can explore parts of Madikwe on foot. Safari walks are subject to the availability of our qualified, on-site trails guide. The duration of walks may vary due to number of guests, weather conditions and game drive schedules.

## TERRAPIN HIDE

Whether you want to capture priceless images of wildlife at the active waterhole or simply sit quietly, immersing yourself in your surroundings, the water-level Terrapin Hide at Jaci's Tree Lodge is proud to boast this unique vantage point.

Pangolin Photo Safaris (where we'll be headed next) assisted with the design and construction of the hide, ensuring its



position and functionality is optimised for a truly unique game-viewing and photographic experience. The hide is visited by a wide variety of animals and birds, and thanks to its unique location and design, one can sit quietly and watch them coming down to drink as if you weren't even there.

Home to our ever-growing "resident" Nile Crocodile, the low angle gives photographers an unparalleled opportunity to capture eye-level images. From the safety and unique vantage point of the hide, you might even get lucky and capture an elusive leopard, swimming elephants

or African wild dogs...

The Terrapin Hide has established Jaci's Lodges as a premium photographic safari destination with its West-facing orientation guaranteeing soft morning light and warm backlit silhouettes in the late afternoon. Accessible via an underwater tunnel, the hide is open to Jaci's Tree Lodge guests 24-hours a day.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT FOR HIRE:

For guests' convenience, our photographic equipment is also available to hire. Whether you require a camera for a particular day's safari drives or would like to make use of one for the duration of your stay, we are happy to be able to offer our guests access to our quality photographic equipment. An Apple MAC computer, with suitable photographic editing software is also on-hand at Jaci's Tree Lodge Main Lodge.

### Camera kit for hire:

- Canon 7dii
- 100-400ii Lens
- Gimpro game viewer mount
- Guests hiring photographic equipment receive a complimentary SD card
- Rate: R1250.00 per camera for use on two game drives / 1 day

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## TLOU DECK

Tlou deck – meaning Elephant in Tswana – viewing deck at Jaci’s Tree Lodge is arguably the best sundowner and dining spot at the lodge, epitomizing all the “golden hour” beauty and epic bushveld vistas that Madikwe is famous for. The impressively elevated structure is located directly adjacent to our watering hole. This affords guests the opportunity to observe the daily comings and goings of a variety of animals that frequent the area.

Complete with an outdoor fire area and safari bar, Tlou Deck is idyllically set-up for unique safari dining and sundowner experiences, against a beautiful bushveld backdrop. Fully equipped with wifi,

## STAR GAZING

Jaci’s unspoilt bushveld location allows for the best star-views at night. Whether on night drive, from your private deck or the main lodge. Knowledgeable guides are happy to point out the constellations and other astronomical delights.

## Jaci’s Tree Lodge – Luxury Twin or King Suites (B, L, D)

**Day 4**                      **September 6, 2023**                      **Madikwe / Johannesburg**

We may have time for one last game drive before we transfer to Madikwe airstrip for our flight to Johannesburg. Make our way to the airport hotel where we’ll spend the night. (B)

**Day 5 – 7**                      **September 7 – 9, 2023**                      **Johannesburg / Kasane / Pangolin Hotel Chobe**

Make our way to the O.R. Thambo International airport for our flight to Kasane. Upon arrival transfer to Pangolin Safari Lodge where we’ll spend the next 3 nights.

The Pangolin Chobe Hotel sits on the plateau overlooking The Chobe River and Namibia’s Caprivi floodplains which stretch out to the far horizon. The hotel is designed around a wildlife photography gallery. With only 14 rooms it is an intimate property and the base for our iconic photo safari experiences.



The Chobe National Park boundary is a few hundred meters away meaning that we will likely be the first vehicle through the gate for game drives. Famed for its massive elephant populations, big herds of buffalo (matched only by some large lion prides) and incredible birdlife, Chobe National Park will leave an everlasting memory. Where else can you find such an amazing riverfront, with bustling wildlife, undisturbed predators, heavenly landscapes and tranquil lodges? The most accessible area of the park is the Chobe Riverfront, this is also where you will find the largest concentration of wildlife.

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Boats are moored on the river directly below the Hotel and it's a quick five minute transfer to get to them and then straight into the park.

Because the river is so special and in such close proximity to the Hotel, you can expect to do more activities on the photo boats rather than safari vehicles while at The Pangolin Chobe Hotel.

## BOAT SAFARIS

Photographing on custom photo boats on The Chobe is a unique safari experience. For this reason when you are at Pangolin you will tend to do more boat activities than game drives on a ratio of around 3:1.

The hotel has three 8-seater shallow hulled photo boats with customized gimbals and 360 rotational seats.

The boats are skippered by Botswana registered guides along with a photo host who is there to help you get your shots. They work as a team to help you get into position for your shots.



## GAME DRIVES

Venture into the Chobe national Park on land in a long wheelbase Land Cruisers which seats 8 guests in 4 rows ensuring everyone has a window seat. It also has bean bag camera mount. The vehicles have roofs to protect against the harsh African Sun and intermittent rain showers in the summer months. As the Chobe is a national park game viewing is from the roads only which can be restrictive for the purposes of manoeuvring for a shot.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

The elephants of The Chobe are always a photographic highlight and tend to be very relaxed, This allows for some very close encounters – while always respecting the animals' boundaries. Witnessing a herd of elephants swim across the river is a frequent occurrence.

On a boat safari on the river on one of our custom photo boats we have the ability to shoot from very low angles which is especially advantageous when a large subject, like a hippo, buffalo or elephant. When lions and leopards do come down to the river to drink, we can position ourselves to photograph them at eye level from a few meters away which always produces a wonderfully intimate portrait.

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With over 450 birds species, The Chobe river is a haven for bird watchers and photographers alike. The Fish Eagles are always abundant and are likely to spot other photogenic species like Kingfishers, Yellow Billed storks, Pygmy Geese, assorted Bee Eaters, Hammerkops, wire-tailed swallows and African Jacana. Unusual, but definitely worth seeking are the rufous bellied and white-backed night herons, with their long beaks and elegant crest.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT USE AT PANGOLIN

- Canon DSLR cameras,
- telephoto lenses,
- memory cards
- and photo tuition by the photo host are all included in the room rate.

### *Pangolin Safari Hotel (B, L, D)*

**Day 8                      September 10, 2023                      Kasane / JNB**

Today you'll transfer to the airport for your flight to Johannesburg's O.R. Tambo International Airport. Here you'll connect with your onward flight. (B)

**End of Trip  
(Code: B – Breakfast, L - Lunch)**

**Land and domestic flights (Jo'burg / Madikwe / Jo'burg): \$5,700 per person (sharing)**

**Single Supplement: \$1,050**

**Approximate Flights Jo'burg / Kasane / Jo'burg: \$600 per person (subject to change until ticketed)**

### **Inclusions:**

- Accommodation for 7 nights as per itinerary
- Domestic flight between Johannesburg and Madikwe
- Breakfast daily
- Full-board at Game Lodges / Hotels
- House wines, beers, spirits, tea & coffee and Game Lodges/hotels
- Safari Activities as per itinerary – game drives, safari walks, boat rides

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- Photography guidance
- Use of photography equipment at Pangolin

## Exclusions:

- International flights
- Travel insurance (highly recommended)
- Items of a personal nature
- Gratuities
- Any meals not mentioned in the itinerary