

## Four new properties open in Southern and East Africa

*It's a new year, and we are excited about four new properties which have just opened in Tanzania, Kenya and Botswana.*

**Sanctuary Ngorongoro Crater Camp** is a private campsite, located on the crater rim in Tanzania's pristine Ngorongoro National Park. Each of the 10 luxury safari tents offer an en-suite bathroom with indoor bucket shower, a room safe, hairdryer and mosquito nets. The camp is well positioned close to the access road into the crater and offers spectacular views of the crater and surrounds.



**Angama Mara**, pictured above, was developed by renowned lodge expert, Nicky Fitzgerald. Angama sits high on an escarpment offering wonderful views over the Maasai Mara, Kenya. The lodge consists of two intimate and completely separate camps, each comprising fifteen tented suites. In this location some of the most romantic 'Ngong Hills' scenes were filmed for the movie *Out of Africa*.

A private hardtop airfield, just five minutes' drive from the lodge, provides easy access from Wilson Airport in Nairobi.

The new **Radisson Blu Hotel**, Nairobi, offers a sophisticated retreat in the new Upper Hill central business district. Located a mere 20 minute drive from the airport, the hotel boasts 271 guest rooms, including 13 suites and 1 presidential suite. Conference facilities are available and 12 meeting rooms have been set aside for this purpose.

The new **&beyond Sandibe Okavango Safari Lodge** lies in a private concession in the Okavango Delta, Botswana. Sandibe offers exclusive traversing over 270 km<sup>2</sup> (104 square miles) of wilderness adjacent to the Moremi Game Reserve. Here eight guest cottages spread out under a cool forest canopy of wild palms and gnarled fig trees. Walls are airy screens, which let through the gentle and refreshing Delta breezes while al fresco showers bring you even closer to the natural surroundings. Access is by charter flight from Maun or Kasane.



## The Blue Train launches new Kruger route in 2016

The Blue Train announced that they will no longer be doing the scheduled Durban route in 2016, but will include a journey to the Kruger National Park instead. Until this becomes operational it will be possible to charter the Blue Train to the Kruger and other regions such as Sun City. The popular Pretoria-Cape Town-Pretoria route remains unchanged.

The route to the Kruger will follow the Pretoria-Hazyview-Hoedspruit line. From Hoedspruit Station, which is located along the Kruger fence, visitors can easily be transferred in 4x4 vehicles to any of the nearby luxury safari lodges, such as Kapama, Thornybush and Motswari, which makes for a fantastic combination package.

## National Geographic - Unique Lodges of the World

Three of South Africa's top lodges have been included in the National Geographic's newly created "Unique Lodges of the World". The ethos behind this collection is to find rare concept hotels and lodges around the globe. These 24 lodges should offer not just beautiful accommodation and gourmet cuisine, but should also be founded on principles which protect the culture and ecosystems that surround them.

Built on a hillside where the smallest of the world's six floral kingdoms reigns supreme, the lodges of **Grootbos Private Nature Reserve** are uniquely positioned to soak up the magic of South Africa's Western Cape. Below, stretching to the horizon, lies Walker Bay, home to the "marine big five": great white sharks, southern right whales, seals, penguins, and dolphins. Vast coastal caves along the shoreline bear traces of a Stone Age civilization. Highlights include a horse ride through the fynbos or a 4x4 flower safari. Shark cage diving and boat-based whale watching also count among the many exciting activities in the vicinity.

The lodge features 39 rooms or suites across two 5-star lodges, each with expansive views over the ocean. The lodge is approximately two hours' drive from Cape Town and accessible by light aircraft, or even by helicopter!



Set within the Sabi Sand Private Game Reserve, alongside the Kruger National Park, **Sabi Sabi Earth Lodge** offers an exceptional safari experience. The property itself, which commands excellent views of the surrounding bushveld offers 13 suites, including the sumptuous Amber Presidential Suite. Each suite features glass-fronted bathrooms, indoor and alfresco showers, and a secluded plunge pool with lounging chairs facing the bushveld, so that you might catch sight of an impala or a springbok while enjoying a swim. Access is via Skukuza Airport or KMIA in Nelspruit.

The remote **Tswalu Kalahari** is ironically situated on an old hunting reserve. In 1998, the reserve came into the hands of its current owner, Nicky Oppenheimer, who vowed "to restore the Kalahari to itself." Today, Tswalu features 10 nature inspired rooms. It is located in a malaria-free area and offers its own daily direct flights from Cape Town and Johannesburg to the reserve's private airstrip.

## Updates from Southern Africa

We are very happy to advise that the South African Department of Health has announced, with immediate effect, that Yellow Fever vaccinations are **no longer** required for travel between Zambia and South Africa.

The decision by SA's health department comes after the World Health Organisation confirmed that Zambia had low Yellow Fever potential exposure status, which means travellers should not be required to carry a Yellow Fever vaccination certificate.

In other news the Zimbabwean government announced on January 19 that it would start levying 15% VAT on tourism with immediate effect. The tax applies to payments for accommodation by foreign visitors to Zimbabwe.

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