



SEE YOU THERE

April **2025**

Photo Summary



Born and raised in South Africa, I am often asked questions about a safari. I don't want to go camping?! What are the days like? These are all questions I answer and you can read on to get a glimpse of WHY a safari should be your next trip!

I love to watch and learn about animals. Their habits, instincts, patterns... humans can learn so much from animals. Obviously I have done many safaris growing up and I can appreciate the various levels of a safari. Comfort and safety are my top priorities. There are many considerations when you begin planning a safari - what are priorities? What is your travel window? If you are flexible, maybe we should prioritize the animals or birds you would like to see? A conversation with an expert ;) is a great place to start to find out what is available. Allow me to paint a picture from my most recent personal safari with my husband (also from South Africa FYI)...

Victoria Falls is a waterfall on the Zambezi River, located on the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is one of the world's largest and most impressive waterfalls as well as one of the seven natural wonders of the world! Things to do apart from seeing these spectacular falls from various angles and gorges include white water rafting, kayaking, bungee jumping, micro lighting and swimming in Devils Pool on the border of the falls. Not for the faint hearted BUT if you want adventure, you got it!

Something I specifically wanted to experience this safari was a variety of viewing experiences. We saw animals, from game vehicles (most typical) to helicopter viewings, walking safari, larger boats, tenders and mokoro - keep reading to find out what this is. The opportunity to see game from the water vs land means you are seeing the animals drink, swim, play, right in the action. It just feels so different. Boating past hippos is another must do. It's important we respect nature and the animals. With one of my sustainability forward suppliers and partners, we help fund the preservation, understanding and care for animals and the surrounding communities. You can travel and make the world a better place!

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From the... Water



Zambezi Queen

The Queen - a luxury houseboat moves along the Chobe River and is the most luxurious way to enjoy a river safari. Intimate, warm and friendly staff ensure a comfortable experience. Lying in bed watching lions, hippos, birds and buck felt like a movie set. How is this real!? You choose your pace with daily activities scheduled. The tender boats take you out with a captain and guide ensuring you spot dramatic landscapes and action filled experiences like hippos bopping up and down, crocodiles after some prey, elephants splashing around... the memories come flooding back as I type this. I am not a 'bird' person but I expanded my knowledge and saw some stunning species so close - I have never been so close to birds in the wild. I could have touched an African Fish Eagle sitting on the bank of the river besides our tender. This experience is a MUST for bird watchers.



Fishing... me?! Surprisingly... yes!

My husband Grant had obviously been fishing before but I can honestly say I love eating fish but have never been near a fishing boat. Being the adventurous and curious person I am, I signed up to give it a go. Some fabulous included private experiences offered on the Zambezi Queen is catch and release fishing. I caught a Catfish of 12kgs! I am not quite ready to sign up for survivor but setting out at sunrise on this boat and the whole tranquil experience was magical.



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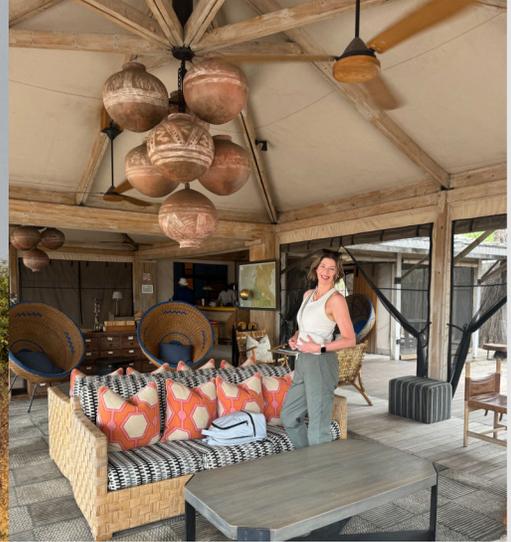
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Onto the next stop Savute...



Savuti Elephant Lodge is situated in Chobe National Park and goes through wet and dry cycles. Visiting in the dry season may be a little more dusty but animals are all in search of water so they are actively on the move. To give you an idea, these handfuls of photos are from my collection of OVER 8000 photos and videos. I kid you not!



On arrival at Savute we did not waste too much time before heading out on our first drive.

Our incredible guide, Richard immediately impressed us with his fun and vibrant personality, not to mention his tracking skills. Within a short while we had come across my favorite wild animal, the lion. We watched these lions sleeping, dreaming and slowly waking up and eventually on the hunt for a wildebeest.



Baobab Trees



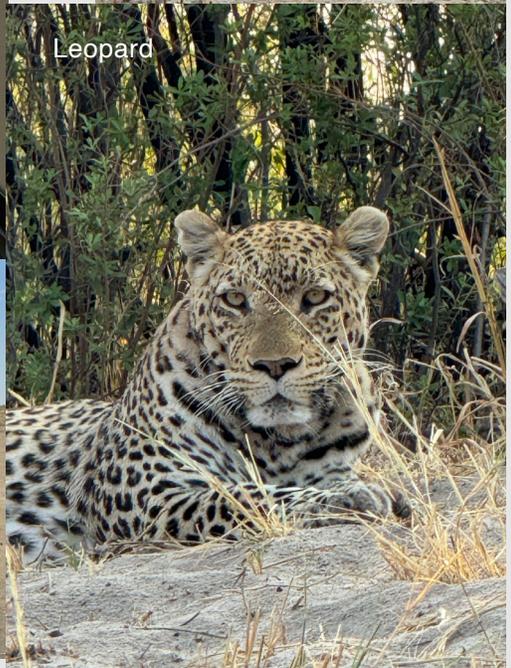
NOT roughing it in our tented suite



Mongoose



Jackal



Leopard



Our private viewing deck from our suite



Tea/Coffee and rusk stop

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A typical safari day...



The second question I get... what does a typical day look like on safari?



Shuttle flight

Moving camps means short shuttle flights (which can be arranged as private) in small but safe, reliable propeller aircrafts. This is the main reason you cannot bring a lot of luggage and why soft, duffel style bags are a necessity as you can see in the photo. You get a variety of styles, my favorite being ones with wheels and a longer handle just for the to/from Africa portions. Once you get to Africa, it is VIP all the way! Flight seeing is a bonus en route. Packing light can be a challenge but I can absolutely advise you with this. All of the top lodges and camps I work with offer complimentary laundry. 24hrs later and you have everything fresh, folded and better than before. Just look at the delivery presentation!!! Coming home after this level of service is a far fall for most. On travel days, you usually skip one of your game experiences. Another reason not to move lodges too frequently. Quality over quantity.



Wake up call

Each camp/lodge varies slightly but a typical day looks a little like this... an early morning wake up from your new BFF, your awesome guide who hand delivers your favorite morning beverage with some biscuits or my favorite, rusks! Rusks are a typical african biscuit/cookie that is made with buttermilk. First baked in a loaf or square type pan and tastes a little like vanilla sponge cake. After it has baked, you cut slices into rectangles and bake them for a few hours or overnight at a very low heat to dry them out resulting in the biscuit crunchy texture. These are my absolute favorite and I grew up making them so enjoying them in Africa brings back all of my emotions! A quick brush of teeth and you're off for your sunrise game drive... or breakfast first, if you prefer.



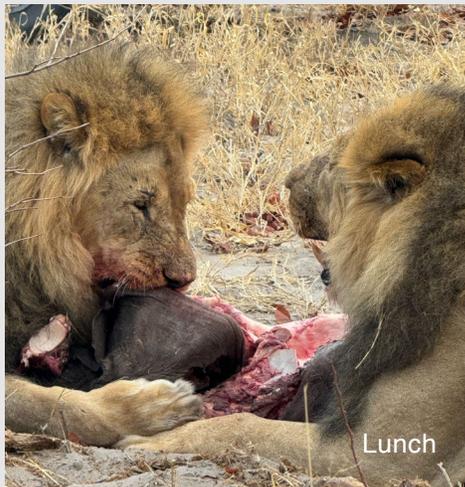
During both game drives, your guide will find a phenomenal setting to enjoy a warm (or cold) beverage with some snacks. Guess what I choose :) The key is finding a safe spot especially if you prefer to stretch your legs. Guides are excellent at making these moments so special. Typical game drives last between 1.5 - 2hrs. Some clients think they are 'stuck' in a vehicle all day - not true at all. You can easily keep fit with beautifully equipped gyms/fitness centers at the lodges or even swim in one of the pools. The beauty of a safari is you can be as active or slow paced as you choose. There are typically 2 gaming opportunities per day BUT I can easily help you fill some extras in your days if you prefer to keep busier.



Laundry delivery



Flight seeing



Lunch

After your morning game drive have a little nap if desired, followed by lunch. You can enjoy a spa treatment, reading in a library filled with books, chatting to staff, a workout... or an experience. Tuck into an afternoon tea before heading off on your sunset game drive. Time to freshen up and then an amazing dinner. Some camps allow night drives and walking safaris. How about a visit to a local village? A helicopter safari is an excellent way to get a birds eye view and cover a lot of ground. Star gazing?!



Night drive

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Another day... another special experience



The Okavango Delta

has limitless floodplains, pristine waterways and abundant food which attract elephants, buffalo, antelope and other large herds, all followed closely by the attentive eye of the notorious African predators. The Okavango Delta (a UNESCO World Heritage site) is primarily filled by seasonal floodwaters from the Okavango River. This river, originating in the Angola highlands, drains the summer rains and then flows into the delta, spreading across the area over several months. Animals live by survival - water and food are essentials so you can see why this is a perfect spot to enjoy your safari.

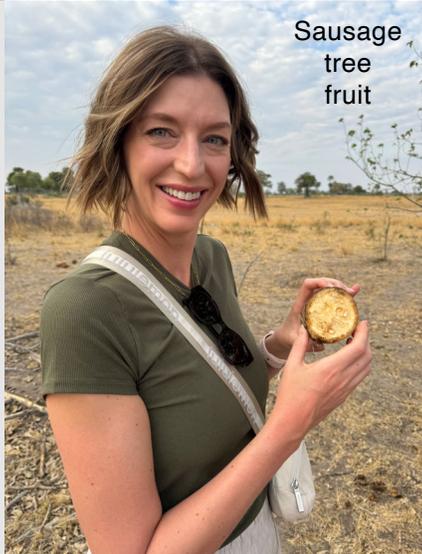
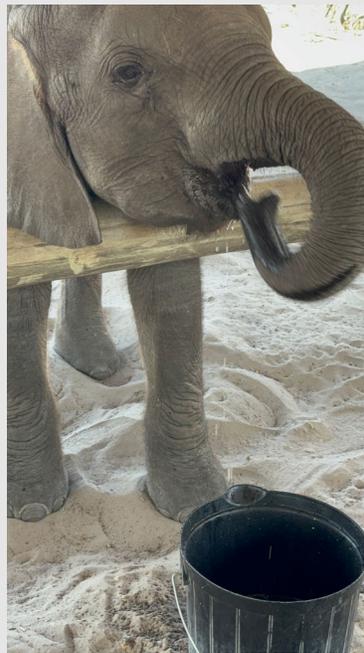
Eagle Island in Moremi Game Reserve is the oldest protected section of the eastern side of the Okavango Delta in Botswana. Apart from the usual wow days, I arranged to pop over via helicopter to visit an Elephant orphanage. Never a wasted moment on safari. This sanctuary for abandoned and orphaned elephants is a safe place for them to be cared for until they can be reintroduced into the wild. They encourage both foreign visitors and local community members to visit and learn more about these remarkable animals. Their goal is to educate and bridge some of the gaps between communities and wildlife. Seeing their labs, vet and volunteers caring for these elephants warmed my heart. Everyone with the same goal - rehabilitation back into the wild. Incredible!



Flying safari style



The right game vehicle makes all the difference! They are NOT created equally.



Sausage tree fruit



Sundowners



Beyond smitten

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Its all about the animals



Warthog aka Pumba



Crocodile



Hyena



Last but not least...



One of the most beautiful lodges I may have ever stayed at, we ended with incredible memories despite having done safaris many times before. Our Xigera suite was spacious, overflowing with interesting design and decor. A safari just never gets old. Always something to see. Always something to learn.

Keeping the theme of safari with variation, we did a mokoro safari. A poler (which is an actual term) pushes you along a peaceful journey in flooded channels. A mokoro, traditionally carved from a single tree trunk, is a dug out canoe used by generations for transport where there are many more rivers than roads.



Sitatunga

A Sitatunga is a marshbuck, a swamp-dwelling medium-sized antelope found throughout central Africa. They are not very common and few actually get to see them.



Mokoro

A Boma dinner often features a variety of locally inspired dishes, including grilled game meats, vegetable stews, freshly baked bread, and vibrant salads made from seasonal ingredients. This also usually includes some traditional dancing and singing. A vibrant fun event! Just look at that setting!!!



Boma



Hippos! →

VIRTUOSO MEMBER

VWT INDEPENDENT TRAVEL ADVISOR

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