

South Africa Safari with Big Five Experience: Award-winning Luxury Tented Stay and Private Reserve

5-Night Classic Safari for 2 in a Luxury Impala Tent, with Big Game Drive, Bush Braai & Hosted Airport Transfers

This Experience for 2 Includes

- 5-night Classic Safari for two in a brand-new luxury Impala Tent at Hippo Lakes
- Round-trip transfers from Johannesburg to Hippo Lakes
- Daily game drives with a professional ranger, plus a Big Game Drive into a neighboring Big Five reserve
- All meals, plus two house drinks per guest per day
- Bush Braai dinner under the stars
- Winspire booking service and a personal Hippo Lakes concierge

Sunrise in the bushveld arrives fast, turning the whole valley amber before the air has warmed. Below the ridge a tower of giraffe moves through the acacia, a rhino grazes at the edge of the plain, and beside you sits a ranger who has spent his life reading this country. For the next five days you have nowhere to be and nothing to arrange.

South Africa's Waterberg is a wilderness of red rock ridges and open plain north of Johannesburg, and it is a malaria-free region, so the tablets most travelers dread never come into it. No vaccinations are required and US passport holders need no visa. What sets this safari apart is how little it asks of you. There are no internal flights to connect, no string of camps to move between, and nothing to repack, because you arrive on Sunday, settle into one luxury tent, and find everything else already arranged.

Hippo Lakes, in the Waterberg

Small, privately run boutique set of lodges north of Johannesburg, Hippo Lakes sits in classic bushveld country, where rocky ridgelines give way to wide plains and the lakes pull game in at dawn and again at dusk. It is rated 99% five stars across TripAdvisor, Google and Facebook, has won the Travelers' Choice Award in 2025 and 2026 (top 10% of destinations worldwide), and was recently featured in National Geographic Traveller. The whole region rises to about 5,000 feet, so the climate stays comfortable, the air is drier than the lowveld, and there are far fewer insects than in lower-lying safari regions.

Your Luxury Impala Tent

The Impala Tents are the newest on the reserve, privately positioned along a quiet ridgeline with sweeping acacia views stretching unbroken to the horizon. Each has cabin walls with a canvas ceiling, a king bed that can be split into twins, an ensuite bathroom, a private patio, air conditioning, heated blankets, Wi-Fi, and a coffee and tea bar, with the whole soundtrack of the bush coming through after dark. Every meal is included, chef-prepared, with every dietary need accommodated, along with two house drinks per guest per day (beer, wine, and soft drinks); additional house drinks, premium spirits, and bottles from the lodge's wine cellar are available for purchase on site. Guests enjoy complimentary access to all Hippo Lakes lodges and amenities.

Your Daily Game Drives

Daily game drives are included, in an open vehicle with a professional ranger, timed for the hours around sunrise and sunset when the bush is awake. Nobody hurries, because the best sightings come from waiting rather than chasing, and by the last morning you will be the one pointing out the giraffe before he does.

The Big Game Drive

One day of the week takes you into a neighboring private Big Five reserve where lion and elephant roam, giving you the chance to complete the Big Five your home reserve started, and it tends to be the drive guests are still describing years afterward. What you see depends on the animals, the weather, and the roads, as it should on a safari worth taking.

The Road from Johannesburg

Round-trip road transfers run in luxury vans, shared with fellow Hippo Lakes guests and hosted by a member of the Hippo Lakes team, with no bush plane to catch and no connection to make. The journey is part of the safari: a welcome at the airport, refreshments on board, and the landscape opening out as the city falls away, with a relaxed lunch stop at an elephant sanctuary along the way, where an up-close elephant interaction is available as an optional extra. That stop is usually the moment guests realize the trip has already begun.

Bush Braai Dinner

One evening, dinner leaves the lodge altogether and moves out into the bush. A braai is South Africa's open-fire barbecue, and this one is laid out under the sky with the coals burning down and the bush carrying on all around you, with two traditional South African shots, including the renowned Springbokkie, to go with it. It tends to be the meal guests describe first when they get home.

Five nights turns out to be long enough for the bush to change how you keep time. You stop reaching for your phone, you start reading the tracks in the road, and that quiet shift is what sends people back to Africa for the rest of their lives.

Please Note:

- Arrivals are Sunday only, with the five-night stay running Sunday through Friday.
- The minimum guest age at the property is 10 years. Airfare is not included.
- All lodges and select Impala Tents are ramp-accessible for majority of areas, and front-row seating beside the game ranger is available for guests with limited mobility; the only noticeable steps are at the fire pits and the Bush Braai site.

Package Blackout Dates: Travel is available year-round, subject to availability.

WINSPIRE PACKAGE REDEMPTION:

Winspire Travel packages and experiences must be booked within one year of the purchase date. The actual travel date must occur within two years of the purchase date.

WINSPIRE BOOKING & HIPPO LAKES CONCIERGE SERVICES:

Winspire's team of seasoned travel professionals will help you redeem your experience and confirm your travel dates, and as a full-service travel agency can assist with airfare and additional guests. From there, your personal Hippo Lakes concierge takes over: they book and arrange every detail of your safari, answer your specific questions about the lodge and your stay, and can walk you through options to extend your trip to Cape Town or Victoria Falls, add a Saddle Safari (horseback safari) on the reserve, or upgrade your tent and safari experience.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Reservations are subject to availability, blackout dates, and major holidays. Reservations must be booked 60 days in advance of travel. Purchases through charity fundraisers are non-refundable. Certificates cannot be resold or replaced if lost, stolen, or destroyed. Ground transportation is the responsibility of the winner unless otherwise stated.