

Covid-19 PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) Testing

Thornybush, with the assistance of Seasons in Africa, is now able to facilitate arrangements for guests requiring Covid-19 PCR tests prior to their departure from the lodge.

The purpose of this test is to detect the presence of genetic material from the Covid-19 virus in the nasal or oral cavity. Most countries require this test to be conducted within 72 hours of departure.

For guests that are staying at Simbambili Game Lodge in the Sabi Sands Game Reserve, or any of our lodges in the Thornybush Game Reserve, we have the following options:

Option 1: Direct Testing in Hoedspruit – Self-drive / Transfer option

The Ampath Lab in Hoedspruit is available from Monday until 11 am on a Friday (the lab is closed thereafter and on weekends) and guests can either self-drive to Hoedspruit, should they have their own vehicle, or alternatively a transfer can be arranged for them to have their COVID-19 PCR test

- The Ampath Lab would require a confirmed appointment made two days prior to the testing, this could be arranged with the Seasons In Africa team directly
- The results of the throat swab test can take between 24 and 48 hours depending on the time the sample arrives at the laboratory
- The cost of the test is R850 per person (payable directly at the Ampath Lab), excluding the transfer to Hoedspruit
- A transfer from the lodge will be an additional charge
 - Thornybush Reserve – Hoedspruit, return (+-1 hour each way) R1,550.00 per person (based on 1 – 2 people)
 - Sabi Sands Reserve – Hoedspruit, return (+-2 hours each way) R2,100.00 per person (based on 1 – 2 people)

Option 2: Testing facilitated by Africa Safe-T at the lodge

We will need to know 7 days before the date of the guests' departure, whether they will require a Covid-19 PCR test. Africa Safe-T, in conjunction with Seasons in Africa, will be facilitating the testing at Thornybush and will contact the lodge with a date and time for the collection of the test sample.

Guests are requested to provide us with the following information in order to confirm the testing with Africa Safe-T:

ID/Passport number	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)
Copy of ID/Passport	Gender
Surname	Email
Initials	Cell number
First Name	Final destination
Title	Date and time of departure from South Africa
Age	Residential address

- Testing will take approximately 15 minutes per person
- Guests may not eat or drink anything at least 30 minutes prior to the test being conducted
- It is imperative that the scheduled time is observed, as practitioners are unable to wait considering the demand for this service
- The sample will be taken to a laboratory in Hoedspruit (available from Monday until 11am on a Friday); results can take between 24 and 48 hours depending on the time the sample arrives at the laboratory
- Thornybush guests will receive an email from Africa Safe-T directly with the results

Ampath Laboratories have specific operating hours, and guests may need to miss out on planned lodge activities to ensure that the sample arrives in time. We will make every effort to try and avoid any interruptions, however, due to the distance this may be unavoidable

For Guests staying at Simbambili Game Lodge, Sabi Sand Nature Reserve
Test cost through Africa Safe-T: R2550 per person
Transfer to Hoedspruit: R1820

For Guests staying at one of our lodges in the Thornybush Nature Reserve
Test cost through Africa Safe-T: R2550 per person
Transfer to Hoedspruit: R800

Option 3: Testing facilitated by Africa Safe-T at the lodge (Public Holidays and Weekends)

We will need to know 7 days before the date of the guests' departure, whether they will require a Covid-19 PCR test. Africa Safe-T, in conjunction with Seasons in Africa, will be facilitating the testing at Thornybush and will contact the lodge with a date and time for the collection of the test sample.

Guests are requested to provide us with the following information in order to confirm the testing with Africa Safe-T:

ID/Passport number	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)
Copy of ID/Passport	Gender
Surname	Email
Initials	Cell number
First Name	Final destination
Title	Date and time of departure from South Africa
Age	Residential address

- Testing will take approximately 15 minutes per person
- Guests may not eat or drink anything at least 30 minutes prior to the test being conducted
- It is imperative that the scheduled time is observed, as practitioners are unable to wait considering the demand for this service
- The sample will be taken to a laboratory in Nelspruit, due to the Ampath Lab in Hoedspruit being closed on Public holidays and weekends; results can take between 24 and 48 hours depending on the time the sample arrives at the laboratory
- Thornybush guests will receive an email from Africa Safe-T directly with the results

Ampath Laboratories have specific operating hours, and guests may need to miss out on planned lodge activities to ensure that the sample arrives in time. We will make every effort to try and avoid any interruptions, however, due to the distance this may be unavoidable.

For Guests staying at Simbambili Game Lodge, Sabi Sand Nature Reserve:

Test cost through Africa Safe-T: R2550 per person

Transfer of test to Nelspruit Lab: R2310

For Guests staying at one of our Lodges in the Thornybush Nature Reserve:

Test cost through Africa Safe-T: R2550 per person

Transfer of test to Nelspruit Lab: R2000

Please note: The rates as quoted above are outsourced and not controlled by the Thornybush Group. The Thornybush team are not responsible for any delays in PCR test results or any last minute changes to the rates.

FAQ's

How long after receiving a positive result can someone retest (to ensure it wasn't a false positive)?

This is all dependent on a patient's symptoms, travel history, and known contact history. We sometimes retest within a 48hr period after the initial test was sampled.

If a guest tests positive at one of the Thornybush Lodges, do they have to self-isolate at their current accommodation or must they be transferred to a designated covid facility (hotel or medical centre)?

In terms of the self-isolation period, guests would be required to move to a designated covid facility for the following reasons:

- *we are not suitably equipped to deal with any medical emergencies that may arise*
- *we might require the covid room for quarantine for other guests*
- *we would be putting our team and possibly other guests at greater risk of exposure if we allowed extended quarantine periods*

The SA Government does not require that guests be transferred to a designated hotel for their isolation period, they only require accurate reporting of positive cases. Thornybush has designated quarantine rooms and are able to assist whilst guests await feedback on testing results. We are not able to commit to having facilities for the full isolation period and therefore will assist, with the help of our Medical Service Provider, to find suitable accommodation, if this is required.