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**The Camp**

Bateleur Safari Camp is ideal for couples, singles and small groups who are looking for a Timbavati safari that simultaneously exceeds expectations and offers an up-close experience of the true African bush and wildlife. Bateleur is totally eco-friendly – full details regarding our ‘green’ policy are available on request.

The feature of the camp’s central area is the covered, open-sided wooden deck that houses the lounge and dining areas and overlooks the riverbed and its seasonal waterhole. The comfortable lounge area is an ideal place for idle game viewing or relaxing with a good book and a cool drink between guided activities. Books are available from the library and drinks can be purchased from the bar. At mealtimes the dining area is the perfect location for enjoying sumptuous meals whilst absorbing the sights and sounds of the African bush. The wooden deck extends past the adjacent chemical-free swimming pool which allows guests to cool off in the heat of the day without missing the wildlife and birdlife that frequent the waterhole.

The central area is completed by a tastefully finished, low-walled boma area open to the stars with chairs set up around a central fireplace. This is an ideal place to relax around the fire and share stories of the day’s activities under a big African sky. Adjacent is the camp’s pizza oven and braai/barbeque area, where food is often prepared by the chef on the open fire.

Accommodating up to 16 people, the camp offers very spacious, comfortable safari units with a unique design. Each unit has: a thatched A-frame roof with supporting gum-pole structure and covered patio; canvas sides with large windows offering fixed mosquito screens and roll-down flaps; double wooden front doors with fixed mosquito screens and roll-down flaps for the top half; a large en suite bathroom.

The safari units vary in size, each sleeping 2-4 persons in comfort with spacious beds, quality linen, mosquito nets, bedside tables, solar powered bedside lamps, wardrobes, adequate storage facilities, a small safe, and a solar powered fan for the hot weather. Plug points are provided for charging camera batteries. Each spacious en suite bathroom has flush-toilet, basin and a hot-water shower. Some units have an interior bathtub and a private outdoor shower. Quality towels are provided.

When designing and building Bateleur Safari Camp, it was a priority to make as small a footprint as possible. Tented walls were chosen over concrete structures, allowing guests inside the units a closer interaction with the outdoors. No trees were removed during the building process, allowing the camp to unobtrusively blend into the surrounds. Literally hundreds of trees have subsequently been planted in and around the camp.

Regular 4-legged visitors that can be seen walking within the camp perimeter during the day include Nyalas, warthogs and bushbuck. Elephants, buffalo and rhino can often be seen walking through the riverbed in front of the camp. And at night, anything shorter than an adult elephant can, and often does, walk through the camp under the cover of darkness.

Bateleur now offers a curio shop with a selection of hand-crafted and branded items for those who would like a souvenir from their African safari.

**The Experience**

What to expect from your stay at Bateleur Safari Camp

**Price vs Quality of Experience**

It is vital that you compare the price that you will pay at Bateleur Safari Camp with the very high quality of overall safari experience that you will have with us, instead of comparing it with the hotel-like accommodation and other frills offered by many game lodges. At Bateleur Safari Camp you will have quality, spacious accommodation with unpretentious comfort. And without doubt you will have all the comforts that you need for a quality safari experience. But most importantly, you will have direct access to all the incredible unique benefits that Bateleur offers as listed below. This is what is really important for a quality African safari that you will do once a year at most, maybe only once in a lifetime, and we are confident that our prices reflect this quality of overall experience. If you’re looking for his and hers bathrooms, white robes and a butler for every room then read no further. But if it’s a real, high quality African safari experience that you want with all the comforts that you will need, then read on…

**Flexibility and Opportunity for Extended Walking**

Many people who go on an African safari prefer to spend all their guided game activities in an open safari vehicle, going in search of the Big 5 and the beautiful plains game every morning, afternoon and evening. This is adequately provided for by Bateleur and guests can spend all their guided game activities in an open safari vehicle as above if that is what they prefer. There are no fences between the Bateleur property and the Kruger National Park itself, and the Bateleur traversing area has abundant numbers of all Greater Kruger’s game species. It also boasts consistently regular sightings of all members of the Big 5 as well as some of the rarer species such as Wild Dog. But, unlike the average game lodge or safari camp, we don’t focus on pure game drives supplemented by the option of a short morning bush walk after brunch.

From Bateleur Safari Camp we give you every opportunity to experience the fauna and flora on foot in the form of extended guided bush walks under the watchful guidance of qualified rangers and trackers. We encourage all our guests to spend at least a little time out in the bush on foot, but there is definitely no pressure to step out of the vehicle. Those who take to the guided bush walks can do as much walking as they would like. This may mean doing a 3 to 4-hour guided bush walk instead of a guided game drive. Or it may mean spending some time in the open safari vehicle until we pick up some interesting tracks to follow for the rest of the guided activity. This is one of the beauties of Bateleur and it is fast becoming one of the premier walking safari destinations in Southern Africa. The opportunity to walk with armed rangers in a truly wild part of Africa is a rare and special treat that will never be forgotten. And it all unfolds in prime Big 5 territory!

At all times there are at least 2 armed and highly proficient head guides and at least 2 experienced trackers at Bateleur, so those guests who want to do game drives only can be accommodated at the same time as those who want to spend some time on foot. Flexibility is the key and we go to great lengths to ensure that everybody gets exactly what they want from their African adventure. We cater for those who are first timers to Africa and want to see as much game as possible, as well as those who want to absorb the finer detail of the bush on foot. Please note that minimum age for bush walks is 12.

**Exclusivity during guided activities**

Many safari operations have relatively small properties and they often share their traversing areas with several neighbouring commercial operations. This often leads to crowded wildlife sightings and the often-present sounds and lights of the many open safari vehicles during game drives. This is also one of the reasons that many game lodges primarily conduct their bush walks mid-morning after brunch; there just isn’t enough room to walk any distance during normal game drive times without encountering vehicles and that would just spoil the experience for both the walkers and those on the open safari vehicle.

At Bateleur you will have the benefit of a 10 000-hectare traversing area which includes several neighbouring properties should your stay fall at one of those inexplicable times where the wildlife all seems to have migrated elsewhere. But due to very limiting traversing agreements with the neighbours, vehicle density on the 3500-hectare Bateleur property is so low that guests may easily encounter no safari vehicles from neighbouring lodges for the duration of their stay. And the property’s location is such that you will have the best opportunity of seeing a host of wildlife and birdlife without being disturbed by other vehicles during your game drives or specifically during your bush walks.

This is true untamed Africa and it’s one of the few places left in Southern Africa where you can enjoy such an experience. The location, size, layout and ambience of the Camp have all been chosen to complement these unique strengths.

**Bushcraft and survival skills**

During your stay at Bateleur Safari Camp, weather permitting, you will be treated to practical information and instruction relating to bushcraft and survival skills. During the guided bush walks you will come to appreciate basic tracking & navigation skills. And back at camp the operational team will give you a bush survival skill demonstration, which includes lighting fires, making ropes & water containers, and setting snares, all using items that you find in the bush. This is not widely offered by other game lodges and it never fails to exceed guests’ expectations.

**Electric Fence**

The camp is surrounded by a 2-strand electric ‘elephant fence’ which is merely in place to prevent the elephants from destroying the en-suite bathrooms, central showers, or swimming pool in the dry season, or the camp’s beautiful trees whenever the mood takes them. Everything shorter than an adult elephant can and does walk freely in and through the camp area and you will receive a full safety briefing on arrival. At night it’s best to remain in your safari unit after you’ve turned in for the night! This is untamed Africa at its best…

**Quality wholesome food**

The food at Bateleur is of excellent quality and is best described as ‘wholesome South African cooking’. It is not ‘5-star, 5-course, arranged in a tower with a drizzle of something sticky on the plate’. It is high quality, very tasty food that you will enjoy consuming in the midst of your unique bush surroundings.

The day starts with coffee and biscuits before your first guided game activity. Brunch is typically a cooked breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausage and toast with the option of cereals for the extra hungry. Lunch is a lighter affair, usually a quiche or similar with salad and bread to comfortably fill the gap between brunch and dinner. In the evenings you will typically have bread and salad to start with, a delicious main meal comprised of a starch such a potatoes or rice, a variety of vegetables, and a protein such as chicken or red meat (often cooked on the open fire in front of the guests), followed by a very tasty pudding. It is all delicious and our guests have been very happy with the quality of the food since we opened in 1991.

There is always plenty of food to go around and you will not be disappointed unless you come with the expectation of 5-star nouvelle cuisine because that just does not fit in with what we offer as an overall safari experience.

**Alcoholic beverages**

We offer a good selection of South African wines, beers, ciders, gin and Amarula, designed to complement your time in the African bush. But this is not intended to become the focus of your stay and we do not offer a full bar service.

**Guided Activities**

Guided activities take place every morning at sunrise and every afternoon-evening from mid-afternoon, all under the watchful guidance of qualified and armed rangers. All guided activities are undertaken on a consultative basis because we do not believe in sticking to a rigid one-size-fits-all approach. The experienced rangers tap into their intimate knowledge of local wildlife and weather conditions and then discuss the various options with the guests. Taking people’s differing interests and energy-levels into account, the rangers tailor the guided activities to best accommodate everyone’s preferences.

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Clients’ specific requests to walk or drive each day will be accommodated as far as possible, but the final decision rests with the lodge manager or head ranger. Whatever your preference, the combination of walks and drives can be affected by weather and animal movements, but we will always go the extra mile to exceed your expectations. Although we operate in a prime Big 5 area, there are no guarantees regarding sightings – what you see is what you get. We do however guarantee a real bush experience that you will never forget!

**Game Drives**

Traditional guided game drives are conducted in open safari vehicles, affording the opportunity to get closer to the animals for photographic purposes – please note that in order to preserve the environment we only deviate from the designated reserve roads when sensitive soils are not affected. During the guided game drives, you can view the magnificent creatures up close from the comfort of the open safari vehicles, using spotlights after sun downers to search for the nocturnal animals.

**Bush Walks**

The guided bush walks are led by qualified and armed rangers. Every walk is a book on its own, with the emphasis on information relating to all the wonders of nature, big and small. During the guided walks you are out there with the African wildlife, sharing their paths and waterholes, the daily dramas of their lives, sharing their space. The minimum age for walking activities is 12 and, although there is no maximum age, an average fitness level is required especially in the hotter summer months (October to April).

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**Daily Itinerary**

Flexibility is the key to both meeting and exceeding the expectations of our guests.

**Day 1**

Lunch will be served soon after arrival, followed by time to relax and unwind before you enjoy your first guided game activity. For those who arrive late, sun downer drinks will be served at the central area once you have had time to settle in and freshen up. When all guests have returned from their guided activities, dinner will be served in the dining area overlooking the riverbed and the seasonal waterhole. After dinner, relax around the fire and soak up the sounds of the African bush and wildlife all around you. And then sleep safe and secure in spacious comfort in your large safari unit.

**Days 2 - 3 (or more)**

All guided activities are undertaken on a consultative basis because we do not believe in sticking to a rigid one-size-fits-all approach. The experienced rangers tap into their intimate knowledge of local wildlife and weather conditions and then discuss the various options with the guests. Taking people’s differing interests and energy-levels into account, the rangers tailor the guided activities to best accommodate everyone’s preferences.

**In the mornings** we set off at first light after a snack of biscuits or rusks and coffee or tea.

Enjoying the brisk air from the open safari vehicles you may choose to go in search of the plains game, herds of buffalo and elephant, the endangered black & white rhinos, the spectacular big cats, and the packs of wild dogs that frequent the area. The ranger will impart his/her extensive knowledge of the wildlife and birds and you may even be lucky enough to come across a kill that took place during the hours of darkness.

Or you may choose to do a guided bush walk, either departing directly from camp or using a vehicle to head further out and find some interesting tracks to follow. The ranger will decipher the tracks and signs left by the passing animals during the night. The thrill of walking, tracking and getting up close to some of the creatures of the bush is an unforgettable experience. During the walks there is a lot of emphasis on all the interesting things seen including animals, trees, plants, insects and birds.

Breakfast is enjoyed back at the safari camp and then there is time to unwind and siesta during the heat of the day, making use of the swimming pool and central relaxation area or your comfortable safari unit. On one of the days you will be treated to very informative instruction relating to bushcraft survival skills. And a light lunch will be offered in the central dining area before it’s time to head out amongst the wildlife again.

**In the afternoons** we set off after the main heat of the day when the animals become more active, following a similar procedure to the morning guided activities for the remaining hours of daylight. Close to sunset we stop at a scenic location where we’ll have sun downers while enjoying a stunning African sunset. We then climb aboard the open safari vehicles and go in search of the nocturnal creatures - as the diurnal animals and birds anxiously get ready for bed, the stage and sounds change and a whole new world awakens.

Back at the safari camp a hearty supper will be served at the central dining area with the sounds of the African bush all around. After pudding, a warm campfire will be waiting for you where stories are exchanged, and guided activities are discussed for the following day. After a long day in the bush there is nothing more rewarding than to lie in your comfortable bed and listen to the sounds of the night under a blanket of overwhelming African stars!

**Final Day**

Set off at first light for your final guided game activity - appreciating the typical scents and sounds of the bush you’ll realise how much you’ve learned already! After breakfast back at the safari camp it’s time to pack up and say our reluctant goodbyes. Whatever you have seen and done you will have had an up-close and personal experience of the real African bush and wildlife! And a whole new world of experiences awaits for your next visit.

**Contact Details:**

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