

KWAZULU NEWS

We may not be able to travel right now, but there's nothing stopping us from dreaming and planning our next adventures. And where better to explore than the magnificent Zulu Kingdom?



TEMBE ELEPHANT PARK

Tembe Elephant Park is a 300km² game reserve on KwaZulu-Natal's northern border with Mozambique. It is home to all the "Big 5" including some of Africa's largest tuskers as well as wild dogs.

Tembe offers one of the best value for money safaris you will find anywhere at just R1,600 (about £77) /person/night sharing including 2 guided game drives & all meals.

Accommodation is in elegant safari tents with ensuite bathrooms and outdoor showers. They have recently been fitted with air-conditioning for added comfort.

Tembe is owned and run by the local Tembe tribe - a true community upliftment success story!

Until you can visit in person, be sure to visit their busy [ellie webcam](#), located at Mahlasela Hide.



SHAYAMANZI HOUSE BOATS

Imagine cruising around the scenic Lake Jozini in Zululand on a gorgeous Houseboat - watching elephants and other wildlife grazing on the shores of the Pongola Game Reserve.

Enjoy tiger fishing, sundowners in the heated jacuzzi - and listening to hippos grunting as you drift off to sleep in your ensuite cabin. This is the unforgettable Shayamanzi experience!

Shayamanzi I and II depart from Jozini Tiger Lodge. Shayamanzi accepts individual bookings but are only guaranteed with a minimum of 6 passengers. Recommended cruise is 2 or 3 nights with rates starting from R2,360 (about £114)/person including meals. Day cruises are also offered.



ZULU ROCK LODGE - BABANANGO



Thanks to a generous German philanthropist, over R500 million has been invested into creating a brand new 22,000 ha conservancy in KZN - namely the **Babanango Game Reserve** near Vryheid.

Their new **Zulu Rock Lodge** opened in November 2020, comprising just 7 rock-clad suites including a 2-bed family suite with private boma, deck and pool.

Activities include game drives, birding, bush walks as well as cultural and historical tours. The reserve is home to an abundance of plains game as well as hippo, leopard, buffalo, rhino and hyena. There are plans to introduce elephants and lion to complete the reserve's "Big 5" offering of this ground-breaking conservation project by African Habitat Conservancy.

The reserve is also home to the 4 star Valley Lodge and Matatane Camp with two more lodges on the cards for 2022. Watch this space!



THE HOMESTEAD - NAMBITI

A new luxury eco lodge called "The Homestead" will be opening later this year in the 23,000 acre **Nambiti Private Game Reserve** near Ladysmith.

The US\$12M+ project by US investor RED (Really Epic Dog) will create a low impact, understated safari lodge for up to 24 guests, that will pay tribute to its historic ruins and lakeside setting to ensure it retains an authentic "sense of place".

The Homestead has been designed by renowned Durban-based Dean Jay Architects, known for their ground breaking designs for Singita and Lion Sands. The lodge will offer multi-sensory dining experiences, a lavish spa, gym with a view and infinity swimming pool that extends over the edge of the escarpment. Deluxe suites will also have their own private infinity pools.



During the first Anglo-Boer War, a young British captain controversially fell in love with a girl from a Boer family and they later, around 1838, set up home on this very site, overlooking the lake. The Homestead was a place where weapons were laid down and people came together in the spirit of peace and understanding. A special spot!





GHOST MOUNTAIN INN

Ghost Mountain Inn is an idyllic family owned and run hotel in the heart of Zululand. Guests are encouraged to "linger longer" at the GMI as there is so much to enjoy both on site and in the surrounding reserves including uMkhuze, Manyoni and Hluhluwe Game Reserves. So be sure to take advantage of their "Stay 3 / Pay 2" Special. For full details on all their packages visit their [website](#).



THULA THULA

We end this first KZN newsletter with a tribute to a very special member of our KZN family.

Frankie the elephant may have lived a quiet, peaceful life at **Thula Thula** ... but she was famous around the world thanks to the books, "The Elephant Whisperer" by the late Lawrence Anthony and the follow-up "There's an Elephant in my Kitchen" written by Françoise.



Guests travelled from all over to meet her, Nana and the rest of the herd. Frankie was at times a feisty but gentle giant. An incredible Matriarch, Mother to Mabula and Ilanga and partner to Gobisa. As part of the original herd that was rescued by Lawrence and Françoise and who found sanctuary here, Frankie had an extra 20+ years of happiness in the wild. The Thula Thula team tried desperately over the past week to treat her liver failure - but in the end she found a quiet spot to rest, near a secret dam which will be named "Frankie's Dam". She will always be remembered.



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