



New home for black rhinos

www.serenahotels.com

The Ol Pejeta Conservancy, along with the Kenya Wildlife Service and Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, completed the largest rhino translocation in East Africa in February 2007. Thirty-two black rhino were moved to Ol Pejeta, bringing the total population to 73. This will provide a safer environment to increase the breeding rates of the critically endangered black rhino. The conservancy is busy removing the western Sweetwater fence, making it the largest black rhino sanctuary in East Africa. Due to poaching the number of rhino in Kenya dropped to below 300 in the 1980's but this number has increased to an estimated 539 through conservation efforts, with the aim of increasing Kenya's population to 650 by 2010.



Multi-million investment

Serena now offer Rwanda as a destination in their impressive portfolio having taken over the Kigali InterContinental Hotel and Kivu Sun Hotel in February 2007. The renamed Kigali Serena Hotel is a 104-room five-star hotel based in the heart of the country's capital. Planned capital investment of US\$ 9.5 million includes constructing 50 additional guest bedrooms, a modern health and fitness centre and general facility upgrade. The Lake Kivu Serena Hotel is a 72-room four-star property on the shores of Lake Kivu, ideally located for gorilla trekking. Lake Kivu Serena will be developed into a top quality spa facility maximizing its scenic lake side location.



Above: Kigali Serena Hotel
Left: Lake Kivu Serena Hotel

Best beach, butterflies and baby turtles

The Mombasa Serena Beach Hotel has not been voted the Best Beach Hotel in Kenya for nothing. Not only has it been recently refurbished, with a new Maisha Spa due to open within the next few months, but it is also very proactive on the conservation front. The hotel has an incredible butterfly project in the grounds that guests can visit where they have provided a breeding area for over 12 species of endangered forest butterflies – and at the end of April 2007, Serena's turtle conservation project saw them release 200 hatchlings from the hotel's hatcheries back into the ocean. Guests to the hotel are encouraged to adopt a turtle as a fund raising measure.



SERENA HOTELS
SAFARI LODGES • HOTELS • RESORTS



Garonga picnic

Healthy options at Garonga

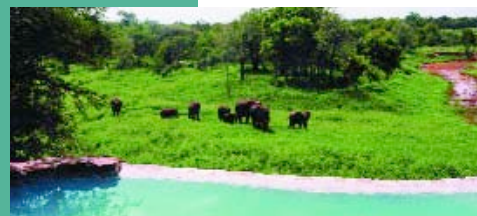
www.garonga.com

Garonga will be 10 years old this year, and in celebration, they will be offering a special Birthday Package for the month of July. Based on a minimum 4-night stay, guests will be able to enjoy a free 45 minute massage plus will receive a celebratory bottle of bubbly on arrival per suite.

Garonga is now offering a new 'health' experience to complement its holistic 'safari for the soul' philosophy. Guests now always have a health breakfast option in addition to the normal Full English Breakfast. Guests can also opt for a 'complete health day' choosing healthy lunches and dinners from a special menu and enjoying a health massage in the sala. This is great for guests staying 4+ nights who need a bit of a break from the 3 full meals per day. This can be pre-booked or arranged on arrival at the lodge.

Lots of exciting news from the bush too! Excellent rainfall recently has left the bush looking very lush with full waterholes. The arrival of another rhino calf has caused some excitement, bringing Garonga's total up to 9 of the 11 rhinos on the Reserve. Recent game sightings include a Leopard sauntering close to the Sleep-Out Deck and a visit from 'Nellie and her herd of ellies' to the tree close to camp where a couple were enjoying their picnic.

Please note that Garonga will be closed for a refurb from 1 June to 6th July 2007.



Packing their trunks - Nellie returns



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Legacy delivering on beach and bush

www.legacyhotels.co.za

Getting active in Madagascar

Legacy's new property, Iranja Lodge in Madagascar is currently undergoing a major refurbishment that will see it transformed into one of the most luxurious beach resorts in the Indian Ocean. Although guests primarily go to Iranja to relax – there are numerous activities to keep them busy! Legacy has invested a lot of money into the latest water sport equipment – plus guests currently have sole access to the 38 dive sites in the area. Current and new staff have been trained to Legacy's high standards and the whole team has been inspired to a new level of enthusiasm and professionalism. The next few months will see some major changes as Iranja sets about raising the benchmark of luxury in Madagascar!



Iranja Beach



Kuzuko Addo update

Legacy's eagerly anticipated Kuzuko Lodge in the Addo Elephant National Park is due to open in September 2007. Kuzuko will comprise 24 bungalows with private lounges and deck areas, with bathrooms boasting views of the dense valley bushveld. Other attractions will include stargazing telescopes, waterhole hides, day and night game drives and birdwatching. Facilities will include a restaurant, bar and lounge, swimming pool, spa and gymnasium, guided game walks and access to Addo Elephant National Park. This park provides excellent game viewing of 'the Big 7' (elephant, rhino, lion, buffalo, leopard, whales and great white sharks) in their natural habitat.



THE BLUE TRAIN
A WINDOW TO THE SOUL OF SOUTH AFRICA

www.bluetrain.co.za



Get a better view ...with a brand new train set

The fantastic news is that the second train set, which has been out of commission for extensive repairs and refurbishment since an accident in October 2005, will once again be wending its way across South Africa's magnificent landscapes from October 2007. This is the train set that boasts the observation car on the end – ideal for enjoying the passing scenery ... or even hosting a conference, meeting or private party!

It will be running a number of charters and special packages such as combining The Blue Train with a safari.

Please note that the departure time from Cape Town for Pretoria will be changing for 2008 from 11h00 to 08h50 – the same time as the departure from Pretoria. New schedules for 2008 have been announced. If you have not received your copy please let us know.

Transnet who owns The Blue Train has taken the decision to transform itself into a focused freight transport and logistics company and as a result they will be privatising The Blue Train. The launch of the public bidding process was held on 25th April 2007. We will keep you updated.

The Blue Train in the Winelands



Upgrades abound

www.raniresorts.com

Cyclone repairs

Indigo Bay Island Resort and Spa will reopen 30 of its beach chalets to guests on 1 July 2007, following repair work after Cyclone Favio in February. The Bay View Villas will be reopening in August. The Sanctuary Spa's opening date has been postponed to October, but in the meanwhile, a range of spa treatments will be available from August onwards in one of the Bay View Villas.

Islands get new names

Due to the intimate nature of its private islands in the Quirimbas Archipelago, Rani Resorts has changed their names accordingly and dropped the 'Beach Resort' for Matemo Island and Medjumbe Private Island.

Taking the plunge

Medjumbe Private Island has reopened following an upgrade. Each of the 13 beach chalets now has a private plunge pool, just metres from the Indian Ocean – perfect for honeymooners! The runway has also been widened and upgraded and not a single nesting turtle or its offspring was inconvenienced!

Catch the dhow

Matemo Island will soon be home to a famous Swahili icon, Kingsley Holgate's 'Spirit of Adventure' dhow while he circumnavigates Africa by land. Kingsley (FRGS) is on a philanthropic adventure through 33 countries promoting his anti-malaria 'one net one life' and 'the right to sight' campaigns. Guests at Matemo Island will have the rare opportunity of experiencing sunset cruises and trips to Ibo Island aboard this historic dhow.

All's well at Pemba

The Pemba Beach Hotel and Spa now boasts beautiful new Courtyard rooms, a gym and a brand new Sanctuary Spa (opening in June) that offers an all-encompassing wellness experience.

Under canvas

Lugenda Wilderness Camp's in the Niassa Reserve, Mozambique will reopen in June with 8 tents, after a slightly extended traditional rainy season.

Don't forget that 'bush 'n beach' combinations of SA and Mozambique (Bazaruto or the Quirimbas) are now easier than ever thanks to Airlink's new twice-weekly direct flights into Pemba from Johannesburg.

Star-wars packages

www.isandlwana.co.za



The weekend of 17th – 19th August 2007 will see astronomer Terry Leaver taking Isandlwana's guests on a galactic journey – sharing his passion and knowledge of Astronomy, including constellations, the Signs of the Zodiac and Planet viewing. Isandlwana is perfect for stargazing as there is no light pollution! The weekend will, of course, also include riveting Battlefield tours by resident historian and author, Rob Gerrard (FRGS), a retired British Army officer. This package costs just R2700pp sharing including 2 nights at Isandlwana Lodge, all meals, the Astronomy specialist talks and telescope stargazing plus 2 battlefield tours. For more details on this Guns and Galaxies weekend, email lodge@isandlwana.co.za or visit www.isandlwana.co.za



Clear skies at Isandlwana

New General Manager

We are delighted to announce that Adrian Wilhelm joined Isandlwana as General Manager in mid April.



Far left: Medjumbe Island

Left: New Indigo Bay

Below: Matemo Island's pool bar





Did you know?

www.kznwildlife.com

Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife has been conserving KwaZulu-Natal's natural resources for over 100 years.

That approximately a third of KwaZulu-Natal is under some form of private conservation.

The organisation is internationally acclaimed for its outstanding contribution to conservation and eco-tourism.

Just one of its success stories include saving the white rhino from extinction in Hluhluwe-Imfolozi in the 1960's.

Years of dedicated work led to the declaration of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park and the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Park as a World Heritage Sites.

KZN Wildlife's eco-tourism destinations are visited by more than a million visitors annually.

They offer affordable accommodation in some of the Zulu Kingdom's most beautiful natural settings.

The prestigious Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife live wildlife auction is the largest in Africa, the sales of which have helped to significantly increase the wildlife populations of KwaZulu-Natal to levels that exceed pre-colonial days – not to mention other areas of Southern Africa.

They involve local communities in both conservation and tourism. Traditional communities benefit directly through managed natural resource use, craft markets, partnerships in eco-tourism developments and through a tourism levy.

Guests can enjoy fantastic wilderness trails in Imfolozi, as started by the legendary conservationist, Ian Player.

'Ezemvelo' is the Zulu term for the concept of the environment.

For more information on the accommodation available such as Thendele in the Ithala Game Reserve, Hilltop in the Hluhluwe-Imfolozi or Didima or Giants Castle in the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg visit www.kznwildlife.com



Beaches take a beating

www.zulu.org.za

A number of beaches in KwaZulu-Natal were badly damaged in March in a spate of bad weather, gale-force winds and rough seas. The unusual weather extended as far north as Maputo and as far south as Port Elizabeth. A massive clean-up effort has been undertaken and we are delighted to report that all beaches along the Durban beachfront are now restored with their shark nets recovered for safe bathing.

All beaches on the South Coast are also now fully operational. However some of the beaches on the North Coast took more of a battering and Ballito Beach is still not open. Swimming and bathing have been completely banned there until further notice. Only Salt Rock, Zinkwazi, Tinley Mannor and Blythedale beaches are back to normal on the North Coast. Tourism KwaZulu-Natal will continuously communicate with the relevant authorities to ascertain progress.

New CEO for TKZN

Congratulations to Ndabo Khoza on his recent appointment as the new Chief Executive Officer of Tourism KwaZulu-Natal. Khoza has been Acting CEO of TKZN – the province's official tourism destination marketing organisation - since July last year.



Hluhluwe Game Reserve



As former president Nelson Mandela said:

'St Lucia Wetland Park must be the only place on the globe where the world's oldest land mammal (the rhinoceros) and the world's biggest terrestrial mammal (the elephant) share an ecosystem with the world's oldest fish (the coelacanth) and the world's biggest marine mammal (the whale).'