

## **Leadwood Big Game Reserve - Explore the area**

### **1. Kruger Park Day Tours**

The world-renowned Kruger National Park offers a wildlife experience that ranks with the best in Africa. Established in 1898 to protect the wildlife of the South African Lowveld, this national park of nearly 2 million hectares, SANParks - Kruger National Park is unrivalled in the diversity of its life forms and a world leader in advanced environmental management techniques and policies. Truly the flagship of the South African national parks, Kruger is home to an impressive number of species: 336 trees, 49 fish, 34 amphibians, 114 reptiles, 507 birds and 147 mammals. Man's interaction with the Lowveld environment over many centuries - from bushman rock paintings to majestic archaeological sites like Masorini and Thulamela - is very evident in the Kruger National Park. These treasures represent the cultures, persons and events that played a role in the history of the Kruger National Park and are conserved along with the park's natural assets.

### **2. Hoedspruit Endangers Species centres**

The Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre focuses on the conservation of rare, vulnerable or endangered animals. Cheetah Conservation is one of their core disciplines. The Centre is actively involved in, The breeding of endangered, vulnerable or rare animal species, the release and establishment of captive-bred cheetahs to the wild, the treatment and rehabilitation of orphaned or injured animals which are brought to the Centre, the education of learners, students and the general public in conservation and conservation activities and Eco-tourism. A hands-on Student's Programme to conservation and adventure enthusiasts from around the world.

### **3. Panorama Route**

With breath taking views, one after the other, that's South Africa's famous Panorama Route. You'll experience mountains, forests, waterfalls, walking trails, and endless vistas as well as one of the world's largest canyons, the Blyde River Canyon. The small town of Graskop is the gateway to the Panorama Route. It's a good place to set up base. Scenic landmarks with evocative names like God's Window, Wonder View, the Pinnacle, Bourke's Luck Potholes and the Three Rondawels beckon. The awe-inspiring Lisbon Falls, Berlin Falls and Mac Mac Falls are also just a short drive away. Adding some historical romance into the mix, half an hour's drive from Graskop, the gold rush town of Pilgrim's Rest gives you the chance to relive the 1873 gold rush in surroundings of unparalleled beauty. You can even try your hand at panning for gold. From Graskop, head on to the Blyde River Canyon Reserve. Thread your way along the cliff tops 800m above the Blyde River Canyon, and at God's Window, be sure to walk in the thick, indigenous mist forest that's often among the clouds. The Bourke's Luck Potholes are also well worth a visit. These giant potholes have formed at the confluence of the Blyde and Treur rivers and mark the beginning of the Blyde River Canyon. Although the visual element dominates on the Panorama Route, all your senses are enriched by the wealth of plant and animal life that the region supports. Mammals you might see along the Panorama Route include klipspringer, dassies, grey rhebuck, oribi, kudu, bushbuck, bushpig, monkeys, bushbabies, chacma baboons and black-backed jackals. This area is also rich in birdlife including eagles that might well look you in the eye. Some of the Panorama Route's lesser-known but no less fascinating attractions are clustered around Ohrigstad. Echo Caves extend for 40km into the rock, a limestone fairyland. At Ohrigstad Dam Reserve you can fish for yellowtail or carp on tranquil waters surrounded by mountains, an ideal refuge from the crowds in peak season.

### **4. Khamai Reptile Centre**

"Khamai" is an old Greek word meaning Chameleon which essentially means little lion. These completely harmless reptiles are feared by many inhabitants of Africa. This unreasonable fear also exists with snakes yet most snakes are themselves also totally harmless. The Khamai Reptile

Centre has a dedicated team that works at saving reptiles by all means possible. We believe that education is a powerful tool that should play a major role in conservation. The Khamai Reptile Centre is situated in South Africa's Limpopo Province, 15km outside of the nearest town Hoedspruit, and is situated in one of the most pristine parts of the country in terms of natural heritage. This area has a particularly high concentration of snakes and therefore there is a high frequency of interactions between snakes and people, making this a prime location for reptile-related research and public education. We are open every day of the year, including all holidays from 8:00am to 5:00pm and are on call 24/7 for any reptile related emergencies. We do not buy nor sell animals and therefore keep our breeding of animals to a limit. Only animals that can be released or relocated into breeding and research programs are encouraged to breed. The Khamai Reptile Centre is situated in pristine "Big 5" country, with lodges and accommodation that suits all budgets and comfort preferences. Hoedspruit is well known for its nature trails and adventure activities such as river rafting, mountain climbing, hot air ballooning, cycling, camping and more. The lifestyle is clean and looked after by the friendly people who welcome tourists with a smile. Lodges, farmers and local communities within the region often call upon the Khamai Reptile Centre to help with reptile, amphibian and arachnid related problems. We will always come out to relocate animals back into the wild.

#### **5. White water rafting**

This is an extreme white water experience, so not for the faint-hearted; helmets and endurance are necessary. One of the most beautiful rivers in the world, the Blyde River allows one to paddle demanding rapids (excitement bordering on truly challenging), take in some of the most awesome scenery that begins in the Mariepskop Forestry Reserve and ends as the Blyde River joins the Blydepoort Dam, and the Three Rondavels above you against a sheer wall of rock. It's a full day's worth of fun and exhilaration. Subject to water levels and no-one under the age of 16 will be permitted and a minimum of 4 guests allowed.

#### **6. Horseback safaris**

Horseback safaris and ride with a herd of giraffe or zebra across vast plains, track elephants or buffalos. Be part of the herd, or simply watch the sun set whilst listening to calls of the wild. Horseback safari is the joy of riding good horses with just about every landscape dotted with game. The riding can often be varied from walking quietly, admiring bird life to cantering through puddles alongside other game. There is a horse for everyone, with various helmets and saddles to suit your needs. Qualified guides will share with you their knowledge of the wilderness, using the horses to best effect you closer to birds, game and nature.

#### **7. Paintball games**

The Paintball field is out in the open in Bushveld surroundings where you can set the competition for an extreme paintball game. Each player gets an air gun and two teams are typically divided. Usually the teams play the childhood game of capture the flag. Each of the teams goes into the field and tries to find the other team's flag. The object of the game is to capture the other team's flag and bring it back to your base and touch it to your flag in a given time period without getting eliminated. Getting eliminated is defined by being hit with a paintball and having it break (splat) on you. Referees will throw you out once you are eliminated. The paintballs are marble sized spherical containers that hold paint and have a hard shell to enable the gun to launch it long distances. It is an egg with a hard shell and gooey interior. The guns are typically guns with a barrel to launch the paintball, a trigger to activate the launch procedure, a reservoir to hold extra paintballs, and some type of pressurized gas to provide propulsion. An excellent way to reduce your stress levels. Goggles and overalls are supplied.

## **8. Kloofing**

Kloofing, or canyoning is the art of following a mountain stream down its course by floating, or jumping or swimming. By its very nature, kloofing takes place in a river gorge, deep in the mountains. The point of kloofing, is to leap over waterfalls or cliffs into pools. This 5 hour trip begins near the Strijdom Tunnel, bordering Mpumalanga and the Limpopo Provinces. Kitted out with helmets and life jackets, guests wind their way down a small gorge, jumping from heights ranging from 1-8m into crystal clear mountain spring water. It's a lot of fun and is perfect to try out the whole idea as you can chicken out if you like and walk around to the bottom of the pool. One section requires the guests to crawl through a maze of caves formed by centuries of water carving out the brittle rock. Once through the caves, guests are taken to a magnificent tufa waterfall to wash off the sand and mud from their clothing. After that, the clients are taken to a magnificent cave, boasting its own fresh water spring and the most peculiar fresh water eel, which almost always emerges to see whether the guides brought him a morsel. The rest of the trip zigzags across the river and through a spectacular riverine forest, until you finally emerge on the banks of the Olifants River where your transport is waiting with a cold drink and snack. Please note, no-one under the age of 12 may participate in this activity.

## **9. Abseiling**

In case you have no idea what abseiling is all about, it's the art of lowering yourself safely down a rope. You wear a climbing harness, and are clipped onto the rope with some manner of descending device. You then walk backwards down the cliff face or dam wall, (or whatever) supported by the rope, slowly lowering yourself down, enjoying the scenery en route. Most commercial abseils are belayed. If you were to just let go in panic, the trip leader could safely lower you down remotely, either from above or below. It's also quite likely that there'll be a decent section of overhang, so you get to spend some time just hanging out, admiring the view. For something a tad more extreme - rapp jumping is abseiling with the climbing ropes attached at your back instead of your tummy, so you go down face first - usually running. Not for the faint of heart. The rock face that we used to abseil is situated on the banks of the Blyde Dam right next to the dam wall, boasting some spectacular scenery of the canyon, dam, the Three Rondawels and maybe a Hippo or two. From where you will be abseiling you will be seeing the Blyde dam wall and the overflow of the dam into the Blyde river. Please note, no-one under the age of 12 may participate in this activity.

## **10. Canopy Tours**

Experience the thrill of sliding through the forest on a Tarzan and Jane style adventure! Canopy Tours take people up into a previously inaccessible realm of nature whereby platforms built high within the upper level of indigenous forests or against the cliffs of ancient mountains are joined by spectacular 'foefie' type cable slides high above the forest floor. Enjoy flying along the slides or spend a few minutes relaxing and absorbing the tranquillity of your natural surroundings while on each of the platforms. Trained canopy guides ensure the safety of each group while describing interesting facts about the fauna, flora and ecology of the surrounding environment.

## **11. Big cat walks**

Bush Walks provide a unique opportunity for nature lovers and adventure seekers to experience the amazing African wildlife on foot and up close. Each bush walk is led by highly qualified, enthusiastic, rangers/trackers ensuring guests safely experience this unique experience. This dedication to the wild extends to raising orphaned animals of all types before re-introducing them to their natural environment. We regret no children under the age of 12 years may participate in this activity.