

# A room with a view

Track down the latest luxury safari lodges with Natalie Marsh's guide to some of the best openings across Africa



**W**atching an elephant approach a watering hole from the comfort of the sundowner deck in your luxury safari lodge is something we could have only dreamed of in the past year.

But while we've been stuck at home, lodge and camp owners across Africa have been busy getting ready to welcome visitors back with a host of new openings and renovations.

As travel restrictions scuppered holiday plans in 2020, even the most-devoted safari lovers won't have had the chance to visit many of these new properties yet, while other lodges due to open in the not-too-distant future are sure to inspire forward bookings.

Here, for the benefit of clients who may have squirrelled away a bit of extra cash over lockdown, is a round-up of renovations and luxury openings to tempt them when travel restarts.

#### BEST FOR...DELTA WILDLIFE

The Okavango Delta in Botswana sits centre stage when it comes to wildlife viewing opportunities, and the Tollman family, owners of The Red Carnation Hotel Collection, have taken full advantage of the location to build the Xigera Safari Lodge, which opened in January. The lodge is surrounded by wetlands, and

guests can take to the water in an unusual glass-bottomed version of the traditional mokoro canoe to see even more wildlife. And for a chance to fall asleep under the stars, they can book a night in the Baobab Treehouse, half a mile from the main lodge, to take in the natural surroundings from three storeys above the floodplain.

**Book it:** Xigera Safari Lodge's nightly rate starts at about £1,847 per person on a fully inclusive basis, including park fees and all activities. [xigera.com](http://xigera.com)

#### BEST FOR...DESERT EXPERIENCES

It's hard to think of somewhere more peaceful and private than the vast expanse of the Namib Desert. Southwest of Windhoek, Namibia, lies Wilderness Safaris' Little Kulala, which reopened last November after a renovation that included expanding its 11 suites. A hot-air balloon ride, stargazing and guided quad bike tours are just some of the ways guests can make the most of the renowned Sossusvlei sand dunes nearby.

**Book it:** Three nights at Little Kulala starts from £2,774 per person, including flights from London and return air transfer from Windhoek. [jacadatravel.com](http://jacadatravel.com) ➤

Xigera Safari Lodge, Botswana



# DESTINATIONS

## AFRICA | NEW LODGES



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Singita Sabora, Tanzania; Little Kulala, Namibia; Sanctuary Tambarare, Kenya; Noka Camp, South Africa

**PICTURES:** Photosafari-africa.net; Le Roux van Schalkwyk; Osse Sinare; Sanctuary Retreats



“Travel to Africa at the moment is still uncertain but the successful vaccine rollout gives us hope that by the autumn things should be looking up. Dates are now on sale for 2022 departures of some of our small-group tours, with many people planning ahead for post-Covid adventures. As we await the latest updates from the government regarding international travel, it is important that agents and operators do all we can to be sympathetic towards the concerns of clients and continue to remain flexible.”

**Candice Buchan,**  
Africa product manager,  
Rainbow Tours



### BEST FOR...FAMILIES

If you don't want your children to miss out on all the action, Noka Camp, part of Lepogo Lodges, has added a family villa. Sleeping up to five people, this two-bedroom villa in South Africa also boasts a decking area and infinity pool. Children over the age of 10 are welcome, and there are plenty of activities to keep them occupied including pottery, painting and baking. “We felt it was important that we were able to welcome families, and offer an alternative to adding a bed into one of our villas, by providing stunning accommodation where children could be with their parents,” says Kate Hughes, operations director at Lepogo Lodges.

**Book it:** Nightly rates for the Family Clifftop Villa start from around £2,940 per night, based on four guests staying on an all-inclusive basis.  
[lepogolodges.com](http://lepogolodges.com)

### BEST FOR...THE BIG FIVE

Seeing the ‘big five’ is the dream of many safari-goers, and guests at Sanctuary Retreats’ new Sanctuary Tambarare have the chance to spot them all in the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya. The 10-tent lodge, due to open in June 2022, makes the most of its location in this wildlife reserve which is home to what are believed to be the last two remaining northern white rhinos, as well as 130 black rhinos. “Sanctuary Tambarare will be the most luxurious accommodation in the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Laikipia, which many agents say their customers have been looking for,” says Pieter van der Schee, global director of sales and marketing at Sanctuary Retreats.

**Book it:** Sanctuary Tambarare starts at around £822

“The tented accommodation is opulent in style and full of treasures from the explorer era

per person for three nights, including meals, drinks (excluding premium brands), return transfers to the airstrip and two daily game drives, for travel between November 1 and December 16, 2022.  
[sanctuaryretreats.com](http://sanctuaryretreats.com)

### BEST FOR...DESIGN

Simple yet stylish is what the new Singita Sabora Tented Camp in Tanzania was aiming for, and its nine tented suites, designed to reflect the colours of the bush, certainly encapsulate that. Situated in the private Singita Grumeti Reserve, the camp was unveiled at the start of the year. “The tented accommodation is opulent in style and full of treasures from the explorer era,” says Charlotte Wells, senior product manager at Abercrombie & Kent. “Highly trained chefs take care of all the meals using locally sourced organic produce, which is a nice touch.” Positioned close to two watering holes, and on the route of the famous wildebeest migration, wildlife viewing opportunities aren't hard to come by either.

**Book it:** Abercrombie & Kent offers three nights at Singita Sabora from £8,950 per person based on two sharing in low season on a full-board basis, including flights and transfers.  
[abercrombiekent.co.uk](http://abercrombiekent.co.uk) **TW**