



Trip Report from May 2024

Description

Photo Essay and Highlights from my guided small group safari to the Kruger Region of South Africa May 2024



Female lions with cubs visit the water level hide for a stunning and breathtaking finale for my guests

May is autumn in South Africa with low vegetation, no rain, and sunny days. Our days were warm and nights mild though night continued to get progressively cooler. The dry and pleasant weather brought us exceptional wildlife sightings and the variety of species South Africa is know for.

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I have selected highlights to describe but as always the best way communicate how incredible each safari is through the images. The most special encounter was on our last morning when 7 lions , 3 females and 4 cubs, came to our hide to drink. When their eyes looked towards us in the hide it took your breath away. It felt very special and lucky and of course the images and video were stellar.



Lions block the road our first morning in Kruger

Our group of 4 arrived to Hoedspruit and we started the adventure in Kruger National Park.



This wild rhino has had its horn removed for safety from poachers

Within our first hour on the first day we had seen a leopard up close, lions blocking the road, a rhino, elephants and buffalo (the Big 5). It was the thrilling start to our 2 days in the park. Ground hornbills were a treat to see



steinbok sits in a burnt area of Kruger Park

Kruger manages fire risk by performing controlled burns. We got to witness one in progress as we drove through the area. Other areas freshly burned were attracting zebra, jackal, and birds as the grasses quickly sprouted anew and fresh.

The rainy season has ended and Elephants, buffalo, and warthogs start to gather at watering holes and enjoy the last mud baths. The enjoyment is easy to see and capture with our cameras.

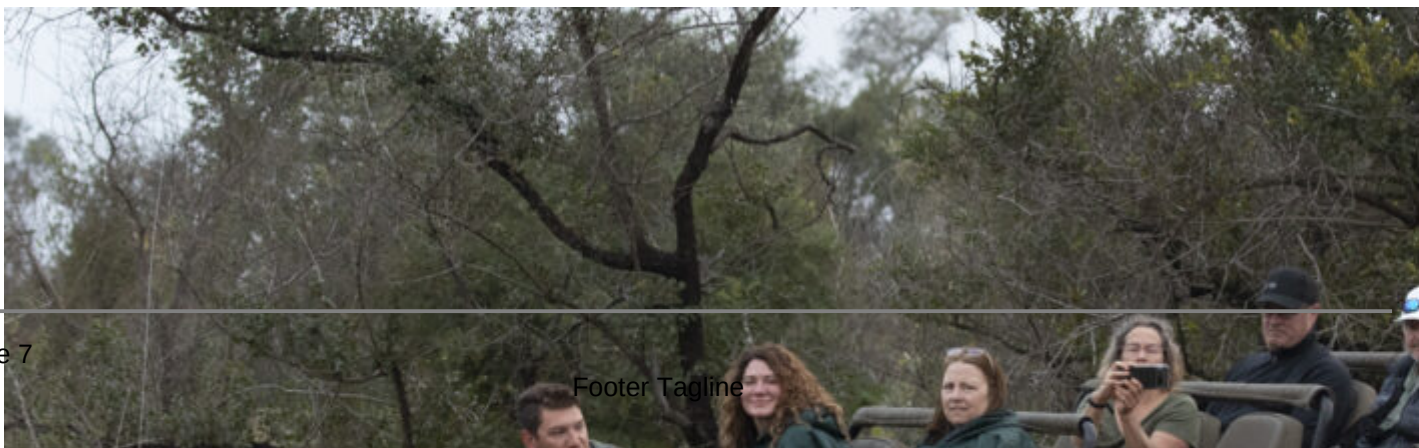


Our visit to the Kruger and Canyons area also included a visit to the famous Moholoholo Wildlife Rehab Centre and a cruise through the Byde Canyon, but soon it was time to shift an hour Southeast to the

Sabi Sands Reserve.



Our goal in Sabi Sands is to spend time with their famous leopards but we also have great encounters with lions and white rhino. The staff of our lodge surprised us with a bush braai evening meal after our evening game drive.



We get close to wildlife and are guests in their world



Spending time with our subjects lets us capture the essence and personality of the leopard

We found many leopards and had magical moments including tracking leopards on foggy mornings and finding them surveying their territory from on top of a favorite termite mound. The leopard up a tree with a kill eluded us this time, but we had no shortage of close up encounters with the beautiful cats.



With so many great images, I help the guests organize and process the photos. I most enjoy working with the guests to transform their images into creative portraits of wildlife subjects that capture the essence of the animal and the feeling we had while observing it.

Our final 2 nights are spent on a reserve that is part of the Greater Kruger Park in a small lodge with a water level hide. The facility is for our exclusive use and we can be in the hide all day or night. It is a short walk from the lodge and rooms so it is the perfect way to slow things down and let the wildlife come to us.



We get our guests close to the big cats for amazing and intimate portraits



Everyone got a great image of this leopard in the morning light and I used this shot as a demonstration of how subtle processing can give a mood and impact



I help my guests process their images into stunning memories



Creative cropping is a way to highlight special features of the elephant and tell a story

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We also can do game drives on this reserve. It is more rocky in this area and provides a different scenery. We encountered many jackals in the morning and a patrol of lions at night. Guests who stayed in the hide at night enjoyed visits by impala, a hyena, and porcupines.



As soon as we arrived at the lodge, a herd of elephants arrived to the watering hole and we rushed to finish setting up our stations in the hide. It was a long encounter and this family herd relished their bath and splash in the water. Juvenile and infant elephants made us laugh with their antics and swimming. The escort male reminded us that they were very aware of our presence when he gestured toward us just to remind us that he was dominant and will protect the herd.





Look for the humorous moments or interaction between the animals

2025 will be the last time I offer this wonderful itinerary! 2 of the 4 available dates are sold out.

Reserve now for the remaining May and September 2025 spaces. Hope to host you on this adventure next year.

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Date Created

June 14, 2024

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