



JUST BACK FROM: SOUTH AFRICA BY MEGAN BRYANT Savanna Private Game Reserve

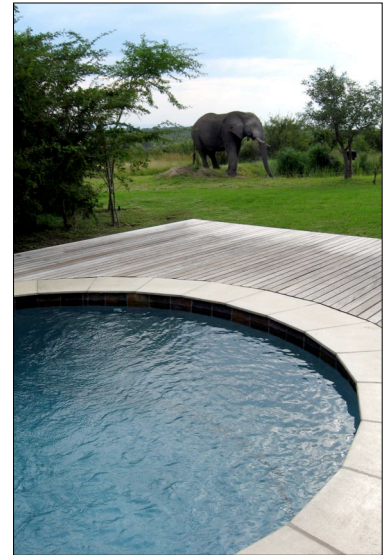
JANUARY 2008



I tip-toed hurriedly from one patio to the next of our Savanna Suite, staring timidly at the large bull elephant on my left, the only barrier between us a low-rising, discretely placed electrical fence. In a whispered shout, I made a comment to my friend, whom I found sitting on his patio already clicking rapidly on his digital SLR. How convenient, I thought, we haven't even left the room yet!

A Home Away from Home

Located in the **Sabi Sand Game Reserve**, known worldwide as "The Land of the Leopard," Savanna Private Game Reserve boasts amazing wildlife viewing, elegant accommodation and, best of all, the Savanna family of amazing rangers, trackers and staff. Your lively host is **Paddy Hagelthorn**, acknowledged widely as a living legend of the African bush. He not only runs the lodge, he also acts as the head ranger, a rarity among managers these days. He is extremely hands-on, making the Savanna experience one that is truly personal, a "home away from home."



Your Legendary Host

Paddy Hagelthorn was born in Rhodesia, his father a District Commissioner and Magistrate there. Convicts often did their time working in Paddy's father's gardens, one of these men typically designated to amuse young Paddy. So they would spend their days in the bush, eating wild fruit, catching beetles and building "kraals" for them, letting them out occasionally to graze like tiny cattle. They would sometimes shoot birds with catapults and have them for lunch, an activity Paddy would come to regret after learning more about these creatures, studying their nests and their behavior.



During the Rhodesian War, Paddy led a team of Bushman trackers. These men would come to teach Paddy everything he knows about tracking, and he would learn to appreciate and use everything that the bush had to offer for survival. Paddy learned how to eat anything, from bora beetle grubs and mopani worms to snakes and lizards, and how to extract water from an animal's digestive system. There is, perhaps, no better teacher than the Bushman, as they have some of the best tracking and survival skills one can imagine, and they had a great influence on Paddy's future.

In 1983, Paddy showed up at one of the top private safari lodges for an interview, wearing a new suit and brand new, tight-fitting, black leather shoes. He was given a map and sent on a 12-mile hike to navigate his way to a dam where he would deposit a rock and then make his way to a privately owned lodge, note it's distinguishing features and then return to the lodge where he started. All of this was done in his suit and dress shoes, and he returned successfully, albeit



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with severely blistered feet! This would be a strong start to a 25-year career in the bush, during which Paddy has guided, tracked and managed as well as having run a school for up-and-coming rangers, many of whom are now very successful in their field.

Positive Local Impact

Paddy has spent over 25 years in some of South Africa's private game reserves, promoting eco-tourism, conservation and community development. He has some of the most admirable views on these issues, and many of them are evident in Savanna's local involvement.

As we sat in the boma around a campfire on the first night, meeting many guests who were visiting Savanna for the second, third, fourth time, a local choir performed for us, all original songs. The talented performers are from a local Shangaan Village, where resident Mr. Zamani Mathabula leads tours for the guests of Savanna. These tours benefit the community directly, assisting the two schools with upkeep and equipment.



As stated by one of Savanna's owners, Mr. David Blumberg, "...it is a fact that the successful conservation of wildlife, not only in South Africa but throughout Africa, depends on the goodwill of the local communities." Savanna certainly takes part in this local involvement. It's simply good for everyone in the long run.



Savanna Lodge Facts

- ◆ 4 Luxury Suites with en suite facilities, air conditioning, mini bar, private verandah and more.
- ◆ 3 Executive Suites with the same amenities, plus a private plunge pool and a large bath looking out to a private garden and outdoor shower.
- ◆ 1 Savanna Suite, consisting of the same amenities with 2-bedrooms, large living area with fireplace and TV/DVD, fully equipped kitchen, private gardens, 2 private wooden decks and patios with large private plunge pools on each. Guests can enjoy private meals on their dining patio and enjoy the luxury of a private game ranger and game drive vehicle for their entire stay.

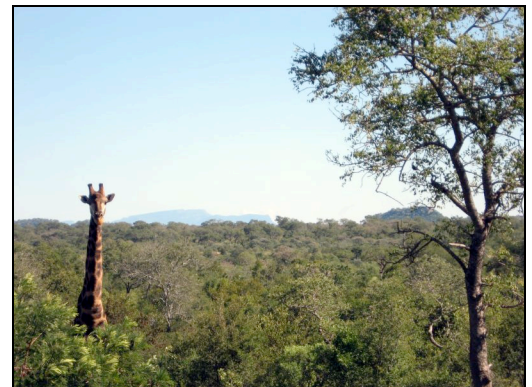
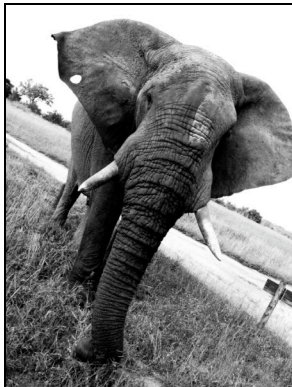


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- ◆ Central facilities include an upstairs library overlooking the pool and landscape, a well-stocked curio shop, a computer for guests' use, an open air lounge and dining area with a thatched roof and a fireplace, the main pool complete with a stone waterfall, and the boma, which has recently been upgraded and now encompasses a thatched bar and cooking area and state of the art cooking facilities. New specially designed tables and chairs add to the ambiance of a starlit evening around the campfire.
- ◆ Lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo, rhino, cheetah, hippo and crocodile plus a multitude of general game and over 450 bird species may be viewed from the comfort and safety of the open game drive vehicle. Game drives are conducted by professional, extremely well qualified game rangers and trackers, who are experienced and knowledgeable on all aspects of the bush. The Sabi Sand Area is renowned for having the best leopard viewing in the world and is known worldwide as " The Land of the Leopard".
- ◆ Daily trips from the Lodge to the local Shangaan Village and a tour of the scenic Panarama route is offered. These activities are offered during the day and will not affect participation in the daily game drives.



For more information on Savanna Lodge, please contact **Megan Bryant** at mbryant@coxandkingsusa.com or at 1-800-999-1758.