CONTENTS

Minjani 3
History 4
Lodge Facilities 7
Safaris 15
Safari Programme 16
Lodge Orientation & Safety 17
Lodge Layout 18
Conservation & Community 20
Contact Information 26
MINJANI – WELCOME

For decades we have hosted visitors from all over the world, drawn to this unique area by the promise of the safari experience of a lifetime.

Sabi Sabi’s mission is to serve as a model of how our rapidly dwindling natural resources can be conserved to provide a sanctuary for fauna and flora, while at the same time addressing the needs and development of neighbouring communities.

It is a privilege for us all to be able to share this unique part of the universe with the animals, birds and insects which inhabit it. Each one of us shares the responsibility of keeping these fascinating creatures alive. We can best do this by getting to know as much as possible about them.

Many guests who have visited Sabi Sabi have been enthralled and captivated first hand by their experiences in the bushveld. We hope your visit too, provides treasured memories and rekindles a spirit of caring for the magnificent but fragile beauty and variety of our world, as well as a spirit of co-operation in the endeavour to save it.

Hilton & Jacqui Loon
HISTORY OF SABI SABI

In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s big game hunting in the area known then as the Eastern Transvaal Lowveld and today as Mpumalanga was at its peak, giving rise to concerns that the animals would one day be completely hunted out. Sabi Sabi’s history as a wildlife sanctuary goes back to 1884 when President Kruger of the Transvaal Republic drew attention to the way uncontrolled hunting was exterminating wildlife. His suggestion that a large area be set aside to afford a sanctuary for what was left of the animals was met with no enthusiasm. In 1898, a motion was carried to proclaim the area between the Sabi and Crocodile Rivers for a wildlife protectorate; and the SABI GAME RESERVE was born. A great deal of hunting took place during the Second Anglo-Boer War, and after the war the British administration decided to formalise the wildlife conservancy. Eventually, in 1926, a massive game sanctuary, the Kruger National Park, was proclaimed with the areas bordering the Park retained as private hunting farms. In 1948, these private farms agreed to create one large 60 000 hectare conservancy called the Sabi Sand Wildtuin, with its eastern boundary being that of the Kruger National Park. Hunting was banned, and between 1979 and 1994 Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve acquired some 5000 hectares of prime game viewing land within the Sabi Sand Wildtuin and developed an award-winning conservation programme. In the early 1990’s all fences between the Kruger National Park and Sabi Sand Wildtuin were taken down, creating a 2-million hectare reserve where animals move freely as they have done for centuries – unhindered and uninterrupted.

Sabi Sabi offers four 5-Star lodges, each with a unique look and feel and with three distinct characters and atmospheres – those of ‘Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow’.

SELATI CAMP

The exquisite lodge is the epitome of classic vintage styling and effortless elegance, capturing the ‘Yesterday’ of Africa. A celebration of the 19th century grand steam train era when the Selati railway line passed through the land carrying gold to and from Mozambique, the intimate lodge has been long-admired for its authentic railway memorabilia.

Embracing the golden African light, the romantic ambience of the lodge is further complemented by the original olde worlde charm with the addition of some ultra-luxurious touches. Selati Camp is blissfully intimate, from the welcoming dining area and outdoor boma, gently illuminated by shunters lamps and lanterns, to the inviting pool and spacious deck with far-reaching bushveld views…. this haven is the ideal hideaway to experience classic Africa.
BUSH LODGE

Welcome to your “luxury home in the bush” - famed for its vast open spaces and uninterrupted vistas of the natural bushveld, Bush Lodge takes you on a decorative journey through the African continent celebrating its people, its art and diverse culture.

There is ample space to relax, unwind and savour the tranquillity of the bush and as an extra indulgence, the Amani Spa at Bush Lodge offers the ultimate African spa experience. The two swimming pools and enormous covered viewing decks overlook a waterhole where wildlife regularly come to drink. Families are well-catered for at Bush Lodge and children of all ages can enjoy the EleFun Centre, where fun and games with trained caregivers are aimed at nurturing a deeper understanding and love for the surrounding bush.

LITTLE BUSH CAMP

Little Bush Camp takes its rightful place amongst the four iconic lodges of Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve’s “Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.” This intimate and secluded camp seamlessly bridges the space between the contemporary ‘Today’ and the avant-garde ‘Tomorrow’.

Hidden under ancient riverine trees, on the banks of the Msuthlu Riverbed, Little Bush Camp is inspired by our continent, the aesthetics of our diverse African culture were infused into the décor, creating an ambience of ‘African Adornment’.

The dramatic architecture of the central reception, lounge and dining areas, with its sweeping high thatched roof with huge wooden beams that cover the entire structure, is a wonderful frame through which to view the bushveld beyond.

There are unexpected design elements throughout the lodge, creating a haven of tranquillity, intimacy and classic safari chic.
EARTH LODGE

Earth Lodge is a masterpiece of innovative architecture, organic design and dramatic minimalism which are the cornerstones of this award-winning and internationally renowned game lodge. Everywhere there is evidence of nature at work, using Africa’s mineral wealth of golds, coppers, silvers and bronzes resulting in almost every facet of the lodge inspired by the surrounding environment.

The clean lines and natural finishes are the perfect foil for the luxury, grandeur and lavish touches that epitomise Earth Lodge. As in nature, everything exists in harmony and visitors are immediately aware of a sense of calm and a restorative spirit.

The indoor-outdoor dining area overlooks a waterhole and unending bush, and the lodge boasts a library, wine cellar, unique Day Bar, gym, sunken fire-pit lounge overlooking the wide open bush and the holistic Amani Spa.

This is the past, present and future of nature – this is Earth Lodge.
LODGE FACILITIES:

Selati Camp:  For Reception Dial 9
             For suites 1 – 5:   Dial 30 plus suite number
             For the LM Suite:  Dial 306
             For the Ivory Suite:  Dial 308
             Should you wish one of our team to escort you from your suite, please dial 324 from your suite telephone.

Telephone:  +27 13 735 5771
Fax:        +27 13 735 5236
E-mail:     selatireception@sabisabi.com

*WiFi:      Available in all guest suites, dining, bar and pool areas. No password required. Please log into Sabi Sabi.

Bush Lodge: For Reception Dial 9
             For suites 1 – 9:   Dial 400 plus suite number
             For suites 10 – 25: Dial 40 plus suite number
             For the Mandleve:  Dial 4013
             For Villa 1 (Mahlatini):  Dial 2048
             For Villa 2 (Thumbela): Dial 2009

Telephone:  +27 13 735 5656
Fax:        +27 13 735 5165
E-mail:     bushreception@sabisabi.com / fomanager@sabisabi.com

*WiFi:      Available in all guest suites, dining, bar and pool deck areas. No password required. Please log into Sabi Sabi.

Little Bush Camp: For Reception Dial 9 / Alternate Reception Dial 102 (Night Porter)
                  For suites 1 – 6:   Dial 11 plus suite number (suite 1 = 111)
                  For suites 7 – 12: Dial 11 plus suite number

Telephone:  +27 13 735 5080
E-mail:     littlebushreception@sabisabi.com

*WiFi:      Available in all guest suites, dining, bar and garden seating areas. Not available at the pool deck area. No password required. Please log into Sabi Sabi.
Earth Lodge:
For Reception Dial 9
For suites 1 – 9: Dial 400 followed by the suite number.
For suites 10 – 12: Dial 40 followed by the suite number.
For the Amber Suite: Dial 4013

Telephone: +27 13 735 5261
Fax: +27 13 735 5260
E-mail: earthreception@sabisabi.com

*WiFi: Available in all guest suites, dining, bar and pool areas. No password required. Please log into Sabi Sabi.

*Please note that due to the location of the lodges, the WiFi signal may be interrupted due to unforeseen circumstances such as inclement weather or wildlife interference.

Adaptors

Our plug sockets are 220v, AC 50 cycles. Please contact Reception (Dial 9) if you require loan adaptors. Please note that limited stock is available.

Air Conditioning

Your suite is equipped with a pre-set air conditioning unit. Please contact Reception (Dial 9) if the temperature needs adjustment or is not in working order.

Airstrip

Sabi Sabi has a private airstrip within the reserve and there are two daily flights between O R Tambo International (Johannesburg) and our lodges. Air transfers can also be arranged from Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport (KMIA) to our airstrip and charter flights can be accommodated.

Please see further information under Skukuza Airport.

Please contact Reception (9) for flight details.
Baby Cots – Bush Lodge
Cots are available for children under two. Please contact Reception (9).

Baby Sitting – Bush Lodge
Experienced child minders are available to look after babies and children in the evenings or during safaris at an additional charge. Please contact Reception (9) to book a baby sitter.

Boutiques
We have a boutique at Bush Lodge, Earth Lodge, Selati Camp and Little Bush Camp. Should you wish to visit any of the other lodge boutiques, please contact Reception (9).

Bush Indabas
Bush Lodge’s safari lounge can be converted to a meeting facility. Equipment includes projector, screen, tables and chairs, audio and video equipment and flipcharts. Please contact Reception (9) for more information or visit our website at www.sabisabi.com.

Business Facilities / Internet
All lodges have internet access and WiFi access – please ask Reception for assistance. Bush Lodge has a business centre with a computer and printing facilities. Please note that due to our location within a wilderness area, our internet speed may be affected and connectivity cannot always be guaranteed.

Car Hire
Various car hire and transfer options are available and we will gladly advise on these and facilitate bookings. Please contact Reception (9).

Celebrations
Celebrating a special occasion? Let us know if there is a special birthday, anniversary, honeymoon or any other special event and we will gladly accommodate your request and help you to celebrate this in Sabi Sabi style.

Check Out
Check out time is 10h30 on the day of your departure. Should you be departing via an air transfer we will advise your transfer time to the airstrip or relevant airport. Please give us advance notice should you require a late check-out and we will accommodate you subject to availability.
Children’s Dining – Bush Lodge

Please enquire at Reception (9) should you require specially prepared children’s meals. Should you wish to arrange private meals for children, away from other guests, please inform Reception or your ranger.

Community Tours (minimum of 4 guests)

Please contact Reception (9) for more information about our tour that shows authentic village living in our neighbouring communities. These tours are at an additional charge and have to be pre-booked.

Cuisine – Special Requests

Should you have any special food requests, our chefs are very flexible and would be happy to discuss your requirements. Alternatively you are welcome to discuss this with the manager on duty or Reception (9).

Disabled Facilities (Suite 25 at Bush Lodge)

Guests who are physically challenged can be accommodated at Bush Lodge, where a suite is available to accommodate disabilities including large entry doors, and stability bars in the bathroom area. The suite is in close proximity to all public areas of the main lodge and access is possible with or without assistance. We can further accommodate any disabled guest for safari in the front seating area of the open safari vehicle, with the assistance of the Ranger.

Dress Code

Dress code is informal, bush wear. For safaris and bush walks we recommend light coloured clothing with long sleeves and long pants. We recommend you wear comfortable, closed walking shoes for bush walks. We have a range of suitable clothing available in our boutiques.

Drinking Water

Complimentary mineral water is placed in your suite. The tap water is safe to drink but we recommend the bottled water. Please contact Reception (9) should you require additional mineral water.

EleFun Children’s Centre

The EleFun Centre is a fully fledged child caring facility at Bush Lodge, where children from the ages of 4 – 12 are welcome to visit during their time. Child-care professionals have a detailed programme available. Please contact Reception (9) for more information.
Emergency Numbers

In case of an emergency please dial Reception (9). The national emergency number is 10111.

Environmental Awareness Walking Safaris

A guided bush walk takes place each day after breakfast and provides an excellent opportunity to see a different perspective of our reserve and rich biodiversity. The focus is on the smaller animals, birds and trees. We highly recommend a walk during your stay – please speak to your ranger who will arrange this. We suggest wearing long trousers and long sleeved shirts with comfortable hiking shoes, a hat and also apply sun block.

Fire

Fire is one of the biggest threats to our reserve and we urge all guests to be responsible with smoking and lighting matches at all times. Fire has a devastating effect on our animal and plant life – please take care. Sabi Sabi has taken all possible precautions against fire hazards. In the event of a fire please contact Reception (9) immediately and then move to the lodge entrance, adjacent to the car park leaving all personal belongings behind.

Foreign Exchange

We will gladly exchange small amounts of the following foreign currency if required and subject to availability:

- Australian Dollars / Euros / Pound Sterling / US Dollars

Please contact Reception (9).

Gratuities

Many guests request guidelines on gratuities. It is customary to leave a gratuity for staff if you are satisfied with your experience. All gratuities are entirely discretionary. Gratuities range and the following is provided for your guidance:

- Rangers: from R200 – R300 per person per day
- Trackers: from R150 – R200 per person per day
- Service Staff: from R150 per room per day

Gratuities may be paid in cash, in the envelopes provided. Should you wish, they may be included on your incidentals bill and settled by credit card on departure.
Gym

There is an exercise facility available at Bush Lodge and Earth Lodge, which comprises basic exercise equipment, i.e. treadmills, spinning bikes, a range of weight bearing equipment as well as a multi-purpose gym station. This facility is available to guests at Selati Camp and Little Bush Camp, subject to availability. Please dial Reception (9) for more information.

Hairdryers

All suites have hairdryers, which will be pointed out during suite orientation.

Insect Repellent

For your convenience, insect repellent is provided in your suite and on safari vehicles. We suggest you apply this before and after each safari.

Keys

Please leave keys at reception during safaris and return keys on departure.

Laundry

Laundry bags are provided inside the cupboard. Please place laundry items in the bags and place on your bed for collection. Please note that charges could apply.

Lost Property

Please report any lost property to Reception. All efforts will be made to recover lost items.

Medical

There are medical professionals available 24 hours a day, within an hour of the reserve. Please let us know if you require medical assistance. Please advise your lodge manager when checking in of any serious medical conditions or allergies.

Mini Bar

Each suite has a mini bar stocked with a range of items. Should you require drinks that are not in your mini bar please let us know and we will provide them for you subject to availability.
Payment

We accept American Express, MasterCard, Visa credit cards as well as cash for payments at the lodges.

Safaris

Your Ranger and Tracker will take you on two open vehicle safaris a day, each lasting approximately three hours. Please check the safari programme in this directory and in your welcome letter as times may vary according to the season. Dress is informal and comfortable, and we suggest you take a jacket as evenings are cool especially in winter. You are welcome to make use of cameras and videos during safaris. We suggest you apply sunscreen and insect repellent before leaving on your safari. Each game drive will have time set aside for refreshments – early morning coffee and evening sundowners.

Safes

Each suite has a safe and we advise you to lock up your valuables. To alleviate the need to carry cash, all items purchased can be charged to your suite.

Skukuza Airport

There are two daily flights to and from O R Tambo International (Johannesburg) to Skukuza Airport, and one daily flight to and from Cape Town International Airport. Transfers can be arranged accordingly by Sabi Sabi at an additional charge.

Smoking

In terms of Government regulations, no smoking is permitted in the main lodge areas or in your suite. We also request that, as a very important safety precaution, guests refrain from smoking during safari. Feel free to make use of the ashtrays provided outside your suite, but please take all precautions against fire.

Spa

Beautiful, fully-equipped spas are situated at Earth Lodge and Bush Lodge. These are operated by Amani African Spas and offer a full range of treatments, including “couples” treatments and children’s treatments (Bush Lodge only for children’s treatments). Guests at Little Bush Camp and Selati Camp are also welcome to book appointments. In suite treatments can be accommodated at any of the lodges on request. Please contact Reception (9) for more information.
Swimming Towels

Swimming towels are provided at the swimming pool – please do not use your bath towels for swimming.

Water Conservation

Water is one of Africa’s most scarce and precious resources. Sabi Sabi is committed to conserving water and asks you to assist with this by placing towels that need to be laundered in the bath.

Weather

Hot summers and mild winters prevail in our region, with summer rainfall. Average midday temperatures range from 30c (86f) in summer to 23c (73f) in winter. Winter nights are chilly and you will certainly need a jacket on safari drives. Should it rain during your stay, please use the umbrellas provided in your suite for use in and around the lodge. Waterproof ponchos will be provided during safari.

Wine Cellar

Please feel free to visit our well-stocked wine cellars at Bush Lodge and Earth Lodge and wine collection at Little Bush Camp and Selati Camp, to select a bottle of local or premium wine.
SAFARIS

Sabi Sabi epitomises Africa’s magic; big game abounds, roaming freely though this unspoiled part of the African continent. The reserve is blessed with a great biodiversity of habitat and wildlife giving an excellent chance of close encounters with the ‘Big 5’ – elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard – as well as the rare wild dog and cheetah, and hundreds of species of other game. With over 300 bird species, the reserve is a birdwatcher’s delight. Accompanied by highly trained rangers and Shangaan trackers, visitors experience Africa’s unique wildlife in open safari vehicles.

Rangers and trackers take great care not to drive through sensitive ecological areas and ensure that no protected or endangered fauna and flora are disturbed during the off-road game tracking. Please note that for environmental reasons off-road driving is restricted to the Big 5 as well as the highly endangered wild dog and cheetah species only. Similarly for environmental reasons, during periods of heavy rain, rangers do not conduct any off-road driving. Rangers will often track wildlife on foot before leaving the road to afford guests a closer view.

Sabi Sabi has a policy of limiting the number of vehicles in any game sighting, again to minimise the impact on the animals and birds on the reserve as well as to enhance each guest’s game viewing experience. At night, only nocturnal animals are tracked and viewed with spotlights, with diurnal animals and birds being left alone. Animals and birds are left to move freely within the reserve as they have done for centuries – unfenced and undisturbed. All sightings are assessed by the rangers as to animal behaviour and reaction to the vehicle.
SAFARI PROGRAMME

(Please bear in mind that each seasonal time change varies each year as to the day it changes, dependant on occupancy, groups, weather, etc. This is meant to be a guideline only)

SUMMER PROGRAMME – November to March

05h30  Wake up & morning tea
06h00  Morning safari departs
09h00  Return for Breakfast
        Walking safari – discuss time with Ranger
13h30  Lunch
16h00  Afternoon tea
16h30  Afternoon safari departs
19h30  Return from safari
20h00  Dinner

AUTUMN / SPRING PROGRAMME – April to May / September to October

05h30  Wake up & morning tea
06h00  Morning safari departs
09h00  Return for Breakfast
        Walking safari – discuss time with Ranger
13h00  Lunch
15h30  Afternoon tea
16h00  Afternoon safari departs
19h00  Return from safari
19h30  Dinner

WINTER PROGRAMME – June to August

06h00  Wake up & morning tea
06h30  Morning safari departs
09h00-09h30  Return for Breakfast
        Walking safari – discuss time with Ranger
13h00  Lunch
15h15  Afternoon tea
15h30  Afternoon safari departs
18h45  Return from safari
19h30  Dinner
LODGE ORIENTATION AND SAFETY

- All lodges are unfenced and animals – including the ‘Big 5’ (lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo and rhino) – roam freely.

- Please do not venture outside of the lodge grounds unless accompanied by a ranger or tracker. All animals are wild and should be considered dangerous.

- When leaving your suite, please ensure that the windows and doors are closed.

- You are welcome to walk to and from the main lodge in daylight, but at night please contact reception and ask for a member of staff to accompany you to and from your suite.

- Please do not feed any birds or animals on the reserve.

- There is insect repellent in each suite and on every safari vehicle, which we advise you to use.

- Please check the fire procedures in this directory and orientate with the lodge layout.

- If you are concerned about any aspect of safety, please discuss this with our safari or management team.

- Please limit cell phone use to your suite.

- All suites are non-smoking and ashtrays are provided on the patios outside.
LODGE FACILITIES
Number of Suites: 7
Including Ivory Suite & LM Suite
Boma
Boutique
Dining Area
Farmhouse Kitchen
Full Bar Facilities
Lounge
Outdoor Lounge and Deck
Swimming Pool
Telephone/Fax

LODGE FACILITIES
Number of Suites: 25
Amani Spa
Boma
Boutique & Craft Market
Business Centre
Dining Area
EleFun Children’s Centre
Full Bar Facilities
Gym
Handicapped Suite
Lounge
Meeting Facility
Telephone/Fax
Two Swimming Pools
Wine Cellar
LODGE LAY-OUTS

LITTLE BUSH CAMP

LODGE FACILITIES
Number of Suites: 6
Boma
Boutique
Dining Area
Full Bar Facilities
Lounge
Private Spa Bath
Swimming Pool
Telephone/Fax

EARTH LODGE

LODGE FACILITIES
Number of Suites: 13
Including Amber Suite
Amani Spa
Art Gallery
Boma
Boutique
Business Centre
Dining Area
Full Bar Facilities
Gym
Library
Lounge
Telephone/Fax
Wine Cellar
Sabi Sabi represents an excellent example of the link between tourism, conservation and community. Sustainable ecotourism supports conservation that in turn allows for community involvement. This is a fragile balance whereby all three of these components are integral to the successful running of the operation.

TOURISM

Sabi Sabi strives to deliver exceptionally high standards and professional service. It is world renowned for its hospitality in the game lodge industry, offering an exciting safari destination, with a “luxury home in the bush” philosophy and the high luxury standards that are expected by the discerning tourist.

Sabi Sabi has been operating for almost 4 decades. The result of this is that wildlife have been respected for generations and through this respect, do not associate our presence in vehicles on safari as any threat. This allows exceptionally close encounters to wildlife by guests in open safari vehicles. The combination of luxury accommodation, cuisine and personalised service, as well as excellent guides and interpretation, has allowed Sabi Sabi to maintain and increase its reputation as one of the best safari destinations in the world.

Sabi Sabi’s commitment to the highest international standards with regards to working conditions, employment principles, conservation and sustainability go back to its earliest days, before these issues were in the spotlight. As early as 1985, Sabi Sabi instituted employment practises that saw staff - drawn in mainly from local communities - rewarded and recognised for their efforts, and promoted to senior positions of responsibility. Sabi Sabi realised that laying the foundations of a sustainable business that embraced local communities was the only way the reserve would survive and flourish into the future.

Ecotourism can be seen as one of the major economic engines, which enables conservation to exist. At Sabi Sabi, (eco) tourism can certainly be viewed as the financial engine of the reserve. The revenue earned through tourism allows the other two arms of Sabi Sabi, conservation and development, to function. This idea that the company needs to justify itself economically in order to be sustainable and survive is one of the cornerstones of the company’s philosophy, and has allowed Sabi Sabi to manage the reserve effectively for the past four decades.

COMMUNITY

It is one of Sabi Sabi’s core philosophies that in order for conservation to be successful in Africa, there needs to be an integral and participatory relationship between tourism operations and the neighbouring communities which border the reserve. Sabi Sabi has long recognised that its greatest asset is its staff, the majority of whom hail from local communities and many of whom have been part of the Sabi Sabi story since the very beginning more than 35 years ago. Today, there are second generation employees based across the four Sabi Sabi lodges, in the hospitality and safari sphere.
With this in mind, Sabi Sabi has always endeavoured to focus its community involvement on projects that benefit and involve staff, their families and respective communities. Our mission is to make a difference by fostering the success and upliftment of our neighbours in the communities bordering the Sabi Sand Reserve. To the west Sabi Sabi borders the rural Shangaan villages of Huntington, Lillydale and Justicia in the Limpopo Province of South Africa, where many of Sabi Sabi’s staff live.

With an average dependency ratio of 1:30 they represent tangible ‘benefits beyond boundaries’ to many people. It should be noted that the relationship is reciprocal; the employees themselves provide a loyal service to the company in all aspects of the operation from the workshop, Safari department, hospitality and marketing. The company in turn invests in human resources, recognises talent and believes in promoting its employees on merit and accomplishment. An ongoing internal training programme is in place that promotes and encourages skills development.

Financial benefits through employment are but one aspect of benefits. The focus of community projects is sustainability, ownership and accountability – in other words a partnership approach rather than a hand out.

In conclusion, a balance that effectively integrates the cornerstone pillars of ecotourism, conservation and community is needed to ensure the effective management of this private game reserve in Africa. Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve represents almost 4 decades of defining and refining this model and has successfully managed to integrate these cornerstones and put them into practice. But the challenge is ongoing and the brand cannot afford to ‘rest on its laurels’. Sabi Sabi strives to contribute to solving these challenges and to be part of the conservation of community, culture and nature for all future generations.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS:

Education
Education is the key to a brighter future, for which reason Sabi Sabi has committed so much of its outreach energy into this field. Besides transport being provided for teachers, bicycles for pupils and books and equipment for schools, there are several ongoing school/training initiatives.

GWF LDLC (Lillydale Digital Learning Centre)
The Good Work Foundation (GWF) together with Sabi Sabi have partnered to provide a digital learning platform to the community with the opening of the LDLC (Lillydale Digital Learning Centre). This programme was driven by the needs of the community and similar to the Sabi Sabi philosophy, encourages community ownership. Located at Hlomani High School (Lillydale), this campus will serve as a hub for all schools in the area where advanced technology will be utilised to offer Grades 4 – 8 the opportunity of strengthening their ability to navigate the online world and all the opportunity it has to offer.

The two programmes available incorporate theoretical and practical components for the Open Learning Academy (OLA) for grades 4 – 8, and the Bridging Academy (BA) for all school leavers and second chance learners, who wish to improve their knowledge in this technological age.
Swa Vana Care Centre
This is a Sabi Sabi supported initiative running within the community. It comprises a care centre for HIV orphans and vulnerable youth, where day care facilities are available for children living with guardians. The centre offers meals, educational activities and a safe after-school environment for children. Sabi Sabi has incorporated Swa Vana into the community tour ensuring that they benefit financially through the proceeds from the tour.

Lillydale Education Centre
The centre serves as a multifunctional environmental education centre, promotes Shangaan knowledge and rural development tourism to the area and encourages local environmental conservation practices through training workshops. The centre employs local teachers who provide much needed adult literacy and numeracy education.

Mazinyane Preschool
Under the auspices of Reservations Africa, a preschool was built and opened in 2002, with the day to day co-ordination and assistance of Sabi Sabi. The Sabi Sabi staff has been instrumental in maintaining the structure of this facility and their relationship with the project has continued to strengthen over the years.

Teach the Teachers
For many years Sabi Sabi has co-ordinated and run the conservation modules of the Teach the Teachers and Reach and Teach Education Programmes. To date the programme has trained over 120 teachers from neighbouring community schools.

Dreamfields
Since 2008, in conjunction with the Dreamfields programme, Sabi Sabi launched a sports initiative by funding full sports kits for soccer and netball teams for more than a dozen schools in the local community. These kits include balls, boots and uniforms, items which are completely out of reach of the general village family. A great number of children will now have everything required to start up a league, inspire participation and foster joyful, healthy activity and team spirit.

Finance
Of course one of the very real problems facing the rural areas bordering the reserves is the very high rate of unemployment. With over 230 staff members, most of whom come from the surrounding communities, Sabi Sabi is a major contributor of employment in the area. To further stimulate local economics, projects have been designed with the aim of creating practical and dignified sources of income and opportunity for the villagers.

Entrepreneurs and Outsourcing
Sabi Sabi resolved to support rural businesses by outsourcing to the local community wherever possible. Outsourced Lodge services such as gardening, thatching, washing and waste removal have helped many local entrepreneurs maintain viable businesses. Talented community choirs, marimba bands and traditional dance groups have been formed and are hired whenever entertainment is requested by lodge visitors.
CONSERVATION

The wilderness is vital to mankind: for in the wilderness we strengthen our bonds with the earth and find peace with ourselves. We believe it is our duty to protect the wilderness, to make it a sanctuary for flora & fauna, for future generations. By creating stable employment for our indigenous communities through eco-tourism and sharing our respect and love for the wilderness with our guests and staff.

Sabi Sabi’s conservation philosophy is based on two principles:

The first is the need to conserve rapidly dwindling wilderness areas and to provide a sanctuary for fauna and flora as part of South Africa’s heritage.

The second is the belief that the business must be a true example of eco-tourism effectively linking tourism with conservation and the community. Sabi Sabi’s environmental management system is a holistic one, where the ecological needs are balanced with the needs of people and their communities, i.e. focusing on the interdependence of tourism, conservation and local communities.

Sabi Sabi is situated within a recognised hotspot of biodiversity in South Africa. The reserve supports over 300 species of birds, 47 large mammal species, 57 species of reptile as well as a myriad of smaller animals such as bats, small rodents, amphibians and invertebrates such as spiders, scorpions and insects. It has over 90 species of trees and many more shrubs and grass species.

We have various rare and localised species. For example, the highly secretive Pangolin or Scaly Anteater occurs here. This nocturnal mammal feeds solely on termites that they consume by using their long slippery tongue. Sabi Sabi guests have been thrilled by frequent sightings of Wild Dog packs. White Rhino are common at Sabi Sabi, while an increasing number of encounters with Black Rhino is experienced. Rare birds in the vicinity include the ‘Big 6’ – Martial Eagle, Lappet-faced Vulture, Saddle-billed Stork, Pel’s Fishing Owl, Southern Ground Hornbill and Kori Bustard, as well as the ‘Lowveld Specials’ such as Bat Hawk, Narina Trogon, African Finfoot and Thick-billed Cuckoo. Unusual reptiles include the Marbled Tree Snake and Snouted Nightadder.

One of the reasons for this diversity of wildlife is due to the many different habitat and microhabitat types that occur in the reserve. These include rolling hills, open savannah woodland, and denser bush along seep lines, rocky outcrops, as well as pans and riparian forest alongside the rivers.

An important aspect of conservation lies in the guide/ranger training. New rangers are selected after a structured training camp, and are then included into our on site training relating to orientation and geography of the reserve, animal and plant identification, principles of ecology and guest etiquette. The training is intensive and of a very high standard. In effect rangers are environmental educators, the information and knowledge that they impart to guests may in a sense also represent a benefit that transcends site boundaries nationally and internationally.

Similarly the trackers meet the highest standards in the field. Most of the trackers are local Shangaan people and possess an innate appreciation and deep knowledge of the bush. Besides being able to track the Big 5 on foot and interpret the diversity of animal tracks and signs like the back of their hand, they also have a wealth of knowledge on medicinal uses of the plants and trees as well as a depth of knowledge on almost all animals encountered.
Habitat management is a very important part of the operation: Sabi Sabi is actively involved in habitat management activities with a dedicated Habitat Management Team, which is operational all year. The development of a competent habitat management programme with input from qualified ecological consultants has allowed for informed decisions on the successful management of the reserve and to continually assess, review and revise this plan. Some of these habitat management tools include:

(i) **Controlled burning.** Various sections of the reserve are burnt on a four-year cycle. These controlled burns serve to clear encroached areas, to encourage the regrowth of fresh grass thereby attracting herbivores to these new open areas and to help to recycle nutrients. Hot burns serve to clear the bush of excessive moribund, collected grass, while cold burns race through an area rapidly without burning as intensely.

(ii) **Waterhole rotation.** Another important aspect of habitat management involves rotating the available man-made water sources on the reserve. Most large herbivores need to drink daily and therefore concentrate around the pans and dams. Many of these animals’ home ranges overlap around these waterholes, and therefore the vegetation in these areas is heavily impacted. Rotating water points reduces such grazing pressure and allows effected areas to regenerate.

(iii) **Road maintenance.** The road-network on the reserve is managed so as not to impact negatively on the environment. This entails constructing and placing the roads in such a way that minimises water run-off that causes erosion. For example mito-drains are systematically placed on the sand roads allowing water to drain into the surrounding bush. Also roads are carefully sited to follow the contours of the crests of drainage lines as far as possible. The roads are constructed so as not to cut through sensitive soils such as sodic patches or seep lines.

(iv) **Erosion control.** The careful placement of roads, as described above, is one example of erosion control. Where there may be additional risks of ‘gully erosion’ by water run-off, such as on roads which do go through drainage lines, gabions are constructed which serve to protect the banks and walls from collapsing. Another example of erosion control is where areas that have been grazed heavily by herbivores are ‘brush packed’. This entails placing acacias or other suitable shrubs on an effected area thereby allowing it time to recover and hence prevent ‘sheet’ erosion.

(v) **Alien plant control.** Aliens are plants from other continents that have taken hold by propagating prolifically and threatening to squeeze out indigenous species. Examples of alien plants include the Lantana and Prickly-pear cactus. These are removed and this is one function of the habitat management team.
(vi) **Waste management.** Sabi Sabi separates and recycles much of its solid waste. Some solid waste is burnt in a small incinerator, while plastics are returned to the supplier and wet waste is used for compost. Specially constructed wetland systems at all four lodges allow for the recycling of sewage and other wastewater via a series of interconnected dams. At each point the water is purified until at the terminal point it is completely clean.

(vii) **Anti-Poaching Unit.** Sabi Sabi has a dedicated APU (anti-poaching unit) that is responsible for the safe keeping of all wildlife species. This is over and above the Sabi Sand Wildtuin conservation units that further enhance this programme.

The corporate sector speaks of asset management in the form of investments of substantial monetary value. For South Africa, its rich biodiversity and wildlife are themselves extremely valuable assets that need very careful management. People need to use these wisely and invest in them so that future generations can share the privilege of enjoying them as we do today. Sabi Sabi strives to act as a leader in wildlife management, through biodiversity conservation and the active interpretation of these actions to guests and to the public at large.

Sabi Sabi is part of the Sabi Sand Wildtuin (SSW) and in conjunction with the SSW, Sabi Sabi introduced a Guest Conservation Levy. These levies are collected by Sabi Sabi and paid to the SSW, who utilise the funds toward very successful anti-poaching initiatives as well as overall conservation efforts.

Since many conservation issues don’t recognise borders, Sabi Sabi also strives to link with many local and international conservation organisations. These include National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World, World Wide Fund for Nature, the Peace Parks Foundation, the Endangered Wildlife Trust, the Southern African Wildlife College and the South African National Parks Board.
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