

Hands-On Conservation Experiences for Travelers with Go2Africa

Safaris with a lasting impact on wildlife, communities and their environments



[Images](#)

Cape Town, South Africa (March 28, 2022): The conscious safari traveler wants to get involved in understanding conservation in Africa, what's happening behind the scenes and how their safari travels have a direct and lasting impact. Extraordinary efforts are made across the continent to protect wildlife and biological diversity, as well as assist surrounding communities in their heroic battle against determined poaching syndicates. The following selection of immersive conservation experiences offered on Go2Africa journeys through Africa will take you from spectator to active participant, with profound encounters of wildlife and the incredible people committed to their preservation.

Wildlife

South Africa: Dart, track & monitor Africa's beloved mammals at Marataba Conservation Camps in Marakele National Park. One of South Africa's most innovative conservation models and home to a population of endangered white and black rhinos, Marataba supports repopulation to various locations across the continent. Funds raised by these conservation experiences go directly into funding tools such as microchipping equipment, radio collars, and camera traps. Spending time with the conservation team and the Managing Director/Lead Vet for the reserve, Dr. Andre Uys, visitors learn all about the intricacies of what it takes to preserve the wildlife and participate in identifying, monitoring, tracking and collecting data on the large mammals including rhino, elephant, and cheetah. Marataba is a public-private collaboration that aspires to be a leading African conservation initiative by sustainably managing ecosystems and keystone species for generations to come. They are committed to driving a financial model which supports the long-term conservation of the park while maximizing sustainable socioeconomic opportunities for surrounding communities. Everything that is done at Marataba is

underpinned by the guiding compass and three founding pillars: conservation, communities, and commerce.

"One of the best trips I have been on was a visit to Marataba Conservation Camps. We took part in several conversation activities accompanied by the two vets that are in charge of the reserve's efforts. I was able to join in darting rhinos for ultrasound scans and checking fertility, the mass collection of impala for relocation — an incredibly well-orchestrated operation — and setting up camera traps. To be able to play your own role in these kinds of experiences is something humbling and fundamentally meaningful," shares Maija de Rijk-Uys – Managing Director, Go2Africa

Ruaha, Tanzania: Usangu Expedition Camp, Asilia's new pioneering safari destination in the Ruaha wetlands embodies conservation and allows clients to participate in the collaring and de-collaring of animals including elephants, lions, wild dogs, and leopards. Visitors are given the opportunity to track collared animals on safaris, support researchers in the research center, and help with camera trap settings. The implementation of conservation-themed tourism is the first step to understanding what is needed to conserve the area and its inhabitants, in order to preserve this incredible natural world for future generations

Communities

Kenya: The annual Serengeti Girls Run which takes place in late October annually is hosted by the Grumeti Fund in conjunction with Singita. The Serengeti Girls Run is a charity event in which all the runners aim to raise as much money as they can for women's empowerment initiatives in Tanzania. All the participants are required to raise a minimum of \$8,500 and contributions raised for the run are donated to the Grumeti Fund, a non-profit organization that carries out vital wildlife conservation and community development work in the western Serengeti. In 2021 Go2Africa's Managing Director Maija de-Rijk-Uys participated and plans to run again in 2022 for travelers interested in joining her or making contributions.

"We had the most spectacular wildlife experiences running among the wildebeest and zebras, being followed by hyena, and hearing all the bush noises you don't hear from a safari vehicle: the loud bellowing of wildebeest, the nickering of zebra, and the giggling of hyena. In the end we helped to raise essential funds to enhance the quality of education provided to the youth in local communities, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to pursue careers and livelihoods," share de-Rijk-Uys.

Uganda: Volcanoes Safaris has developed a Batwa Resettlement Project and Heritage Tour at Gahinga Lodge. The Gahinga Batwa community comprises over 100 adults and children that have had no permanent home since they left Mgahinga National Park over 25 years ago. In 2018, Volcanoes Safaris built a permanent village for the Batwa community and their families on about 10 acres of land to allow them to build homes, a community center and have land for agricultural and recreational use.

The Batwa Cultural Heritage Site represents a significant commitment to the Batwa tribe from Volcanoes Safaris and the Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust (VSPT). Built on the Mount Gahinga Lodge property, the Heritage Site consists of a demonstration-based herbal garden, a small collection of traditional huts

and a short trail that allows the Batwa to demonstrate to interested Volcanoes Safaris guests, how they used to live, hunt, and collect honey and other resources from the forest.

Environments

South Africa: Kwandwe Private Game Reserve comprises 30 rooms split across six intimate lodges, villas, and camps, providing understated luxury and one of the highest land-to-guest ratios in South Africa. Working through their social development partner, the [Ubuye Foundation](#), they invest in projects that improve lives and create sustainable livelihood opportunities in marginalized rural communities.

A guest stay allows travelers to participate in a variety of activities to get to know the people, participate in vital conservation work and give back to the community which makes the Kwandwe experience possible. Planting spekboom is an important guest initiative as it is a type of thicket vegetation that is native to the Eastern Cape and prolific on Kwandwe Private Game Reserve. One of the top five carbon-storing vegetations on the planet, helping to plant spekboom is a great way to offset your carbon footprint.

Visitors can also offer their expertise, skills, and time by reading stories during the preschool morning, helping in the vegetable garden, assisting at the afternoon homework club, offering basic computer training for children and staff, as some examples.

Across Africa: From Kenya to Botswana, a handful of lodges have embraced a low-impact approach to sustainable eco-tourism. [Electric safari vehicles](#) are rapidly getting into pole position for zero-emission, carbon-neutral holidays in Africa. Sustainable safari experiences with their innovative electric safari vehicles are typically retrofitted diesel 4x4 vehicles – the internal combustion engines are replaced with an electric motor, batteries, and charging points. The result is a near-silent, solar-powered vehicle that significantly reduces the disturbance for animals and the harm done to the environment.

Benefits of electric vehicles include:

- **Smooth & Silent Game Drives** - the near-silent vehicles amplify the sounds of the African bush – bird and animal calls become much easier to hear. Wildlife photographers will also love the total absence of shuddering start-ups and jerky gear changes that are synonymous with diesel-powered 4x4 safari vehicles.
- **Zero Emissions** - an electric safari vehicle does not burn any fuel. There is no need for exhaust systems and therefore no hazardous gasses are emitted into the atmosphere.
- **Reliability** - electric safari cars are much more reliable than any standard combustion engine, as the motor relies on only one working part.
- **Low Maintenance** - running costs are greatly reduced in electric safari cars. There is no need to purchase fuel – the vehicles can be powered by the sun – and almost no maintenance is required on an electric motor.
- **Performance** - electric safari cars run at around 95% efficiency vs 20-30% for standard combustion engines. This is a significant improvement in the performance of the vehicle. Capability is also not a concern – electrical components are rugged and the sealed 'engines' allow guides to wade through deep sand and even ford rivers.

About Go2Africa:

[Go2Africa](#) is a multi-award-winning tour operator based out of Cape Town that curates exceptional, personalized African vacations, specializing in safaris, plus wineland and gastronomy experiences, city escapes, beach, diving, and golf tours across the continent. Since 1998, the team has been committed to building first-hand knowledge of every destination, lodge, and activity they recommend from their 3000+ partners. Working across 15 countries in Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands, 100% of their revenues stay in Africa, supporting local communities and conservation projects, making a difference long after their clients return home. With an entire team of African-born and raised specialists, including seven named as Conde Nast Traveler's Top Travel Specialists in 2021, travelers are in expert hands. From spotting the Big 5 to following the Wildebeest Migration, trekking into the rainforests to encounter endangered mountain gorillas, enjoying world-class scuba diving and whale watching, or simply enjoying sundowner drinks on an endless savannah, Go2Africa can help create the perfect experience to immerse oneself in the magic of Africa - one of life's most incredible experiences.

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