



*Marakapula*  
R E S E R V E

FACTSHEET



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SUNDESTINATIONS™



### INTRODUCTION

A private Big 5 game reserve located just outside the Kruger National Park's boundaries, Marakapula is an idyllic hideaway in South Africa's lush Limpopo Province. Secluded from the hype of this safari hotspot, the reserve is a retreat for both self-drivers and those on a guided safari tour.

Only 25km from the Kruger's Phalaborwa gate, the 15 000 hectare Marakapula Reserve is conveniently positioned for guests to enjoy full day trips to the Kruger, while the appeal of the Big 5 reserve itself is undeniable. Giant, wild fig trees line the heaving Selati River, which courses through the diverse landscape. This region near Phalaborwa is known for its striking boulder hills that sprout up intermittently on the horizon turning this undiscovered reserve into leopard paradise!

Beautifully built on the Selati River is Makubu Lodge, vibrantly decorated with African artefacts, high ceilings and thatched roofs. The individual chalets each have private decks with views of the river and all the wildlife that comes to its banks. The air is filled with the sound of hundreds of birds during the day, frogs at night, and often the crashing of feeding elephants nearby.

### FACILITIES

- Main lodge overlooking the river with 2 indoor lounges, a reception area, guest bathrooms and a dining room
- Swimming pool overlooking the river, with wooden

deck and sun loungers

- Numerous tables and chairs set up under the trees, and in other locations for a variety of places to sit and relax
- Boma area with brick fire slab and an arrangement of chairs surrounding it
- 7 Individual, thatched chalets with riverfront views and private decks
- Ensuite bathrooms in each chalet with shower, bath and vanity cabinet
- Fireplaces in each of the chalets and in the lounge in the main lodge
- Cupboards with hanging space and shelving in each chalet
- Desks and bedside tables with lamps in each chalet
- Air-conditioning and ceiling fans in each chalet
- Each chalet has a small lounge area consisting of 2 armchairs and a coffee table
- Every ensuite bathroom has face cloths, hand towels, floor mats, bath towels, cotton dressing gowns, and slippers for each guest
- Complimentary bathroom products, soaps, and shower caps available in each ensuite bathroom
- Daily cleaning and evening turn-down service
- Bottles of water in the chalets, replenished daily
- Free wifi in the main lodge
- Laundry service with laundry baskets in each chalet

### AT A GLANCE

- Luxury lodge on the banks of the Selati River in a private Big 5 Marakapula Reserve near Kruger.
- Only 25km from Kruger's Phalaborwa gate opening guests up to day trips in the National Park.



- Activities that can be booked at the lodge include guided tours to the Kruger National Park, Blyde River Canyon and boat cruises on the Olifants River in Kruger.
- Marakapula is a community owned reserve.
- Makubu Lodge has individual thatched chalets, all looking onto the river with private decks and views.
- Activities in Marakapula Reserve include morning and evening game drives, walking safaris, fishing and birding.
- Very spacious lodge with high ceilings and large windows making use of the riverfront view.
- Bedrooms are luxurious and pampering, while tasty home-cooked food is served at lunch and dinner time.

## ACTIVITIES

Marakapula Reserve is in the epicentre of exciting safari activities in this region. With a number of activities on offer and the freedom to choose when you'd like to do what, a few days at Marakapula can involve a diverse and memorable itinerary. Guests can embark on guided tours with a ranger at Makubu Lodge, or they can conduct self-drive tours or guided tours into the Kruger National Park.

- **Kruger Park day trips:** The Phalaborwa gate is only 25km from Marakapula and offers some of the best game viewing in the country. The Letaba River region is well within reach in this part of the park, and guests can visit the Elephant museum at Letaba restcamp.
- **Marakapula game drives:** Morning and evening game drives with guide, Keith, in the Big 5 Marakapula Reserve. With 15 000 hectares of

land to cover, guests enjoy a coffee break with snacks in a scenic spot before making their way back to the lodge.

- **Walking safaris:** Enjoy a guided walk through the Marakapula Reserve and chance a meeting with one of the Big 5 on foot, while an array of general game species often cross your path.
- **Fishing:** The Selati River that flows in front of Makubu Lodge is swimming with bream and barbel, offering the keen fishermen ample opportunity to practise their skills. There are a couple of rods available to use, and the staff will help you find worms for bait!
- **Blyde River Canyon:** This region of South Africa has such a variety of landscapes and is famous for its natural beauty. The Panorama Route, including the breath-taking Blyde River Canyon is a short drive away and guided tours are offered.
- **Boat cruises:** Just outside the town of Phalaborwa and only 20 minutes from Marakapula is the beautiful Olifants River, inside the borders of the Kruger National Park. Guests can spend a few hours cruising down this section of the river with drinks and lunch enjoyed on board, and the presence of birds, buffalo, antelope, hippo, and elephant being a regular occurrence.

## TYPICAL DAY AT MARAKAPULA

The routine at Marakapula can be tailor-made to suit the guests, so that daily schedules are built around what the guests would most like to do. With the Kruger Park and the Blyde River Canyon nearby, among many other attractions, guests can discuss various itineraries. Generally, the schedule for the day is as follows:



- In the mornings, guests will wake up at 05h00 and head to the lodge where breakfast cereals, muffins, tea and coffee will be set up for your early start.
- Morning game drives in the reserve will depart from the lodge at about 06h00 and explore the vast surrounding area before returning at about 10h30 for some time to freshen up and relax before lunch at 12h30.
- After lunch, guests have the afternoon to fish, bird-watch, read, nap, or catch up online at the lodge.
- Evening game drives depart at around 16h00, but in summer when the temperatures are very hot, departure time is slightly later. Spend the early evening in an open Land Cruiser and watch the bush come to life, heading back with a spotlight once its dark.
- Drinks and snacks are served in the boma once guests return, and a big campfire draws everyone to their chairs surrounding it. Enjoy some chatting and bush story exchange with the others until you are seated for dinner at about 21h00.
- Guests who are booked for a full day trip to the Kruger, or the Blyde River Canyon will arrive back at the lodge in time to freshen up and regroup in the boma for drinks before dinner.

### LOCATION

The location of Marakapula Reserve is in the northwest of the Limpopo Province of South Africa, only 25km from the Phalaborwa gate of the Kruger National Park. Halfway between the towns of Tzaneen and Phalaborwa, the Marakapula Reserve

is community-owned land that has been dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and has blossomed as a unique tourist destination.

Marakapula is approximately 80km from Hoedspruit, which is a safari hotspot for visitors of the Greater Kruger Region. Only an hour's drive from Hoedspruit town, Marakapula is located outside of the hub of excitement, and offers visitors a tranquil environment in which to unwind. Makubu Lodge is only a few minutes drive into the reserve from the Marakapula gate and is settled beautifully along the Selati River.

What makes this a superb location is the close distance to the Kruger National Park. Guests can go on a guided tour of the park with Makubu's competent guide, or they can drive themselves along the one straight road that takes them on a 20-minute drive to the Phalaborwa park gate.

### HOW TO GET THERE

Accessing Marakapula is very straightforward, making it ideal for self-driving guests as well as guests arriving via transfer vehicle. Phalaborwa is the closest town to Marakapula at about 20km distance, while most guests arrive at Hoedspruit airport (Eastgate airport) and drive or transfer the 70km to Marakapula Reserve.

Upon arrival at Hoedspruit airport guests can pick up their rental cars or join their transfer team who will be ready and waiting for them. Hoedspruit



airport is located in this very popular safari area of the Greater Kruger, so get ready to take in the African environment from the get go! Guests driving themselves can follow these very simple directions to Marakapula Reserve from Hoedspruit airport:

Turn right onto Argyle road upon exiting the airport gates and drive straight until you reach the T-junction with the R40. Turn right onto the R40 and you will find yourself on a straight road that takes you through Hoedspruit town, then through Mica, and eventually to a T-junction with the R71. Turn left onto the R71 towards Gravelotte and drive for 15km until you reach Marakapula gates on your left. Follow the signs in the reserve saying 'lodge' and find yourself on the Selati River at Makubu Lodge.

## CHILD POLICIES

Children of all ages are welcome at Makubu Lodge, although only children over 6 years old are permitted on the scheduled game drives. Marakapula Reserve offers babysitting services (R80/hour).

Children aged 12 & over pay the full adult rate, while children aged 6 to 12 pay 50% of the adult rate. Children under age 6 sharing with 2 full-paying adults stay free of charge. Children aged 0-12 pay the full adult rate on all activities outside the reserve.

## RATES

**1 January 2015 - 31 December 2015**

**Full board + activities on the reserve:** R2550 per

person sharing

**Dinner, bed & breakfast:** R1300 per person sharing

**Dinner, lunch, bed & breakfast:** R1550 per person sharing

**Bed & breakfast:** R975 per person sharing

## EXCLUDES

Accommodation rates exclude soft and alcoholic drinks, and all items of a personal nature. Activity rates exclude alcoholic beverages.

## GENERAL TRAVEL INFO:

### Weather

The climate in this area of South Africa brings hot, wet summers, and dry winters. The mid-year winter season can bring chilly evenings and mornings, but the daytime temperatures remain moderate at  $\pm 23$  degrees Celsius. In Summer, the days can get very hot, often reaching the high 30s (degrees Celsius), and evenings stay warm, too.

The first rains hit the Kruger around October-November, before which it is desperately dry and hot. The winter turns the trees and grasses brown and bare, although this is usually an easier time for game viewing. The summer rains often arrive with dramatic thunderstorms and lightning and the moisture replenishes the land.

The rains continue all the way to March-April, accompanied by humidity and heat, but the bush



turns vibrantly green and the birding around this time is incredible. After the summer heat is over, winter comes as a cool relief around June-July and sometimes mornings can be icy cold.

### **Wildlife**

The Kruger National Park is known throughout the world as a top game viewing destination. It is the size of Wales and encompasses a number of different habitats and ecosystems, making its wildlife population diverse and abundant. The park is home to over 150 mammal species and over 500 species of birds making game drives an experience of epic proportions.

The Big 5 occurs all over the park, while hippos and crocodiles guard the river; jackals, hyenas, cheetahs, honey badgers, and servals add to the list of predators; and an array of antelope species are spotted all over. Look out for smaller creatures like tortoises, snakes, and monitor lizards, too.

Marakapula Reserve itself is a gorgeous 15 000 hectare property, hosting its own population of the Big 5. The Selati River that runs through the reserve feeds a plethora of water-loving birds, large numbers of antelope like bush buck, which thrive in the forested environment. Fish like bream and barbel swim in the waters, while elephants and hippos can be seen from the comfort of Makubu Lodge.

### **Malaria**

The Kruger Park is a low-risk Malaria area, but nonetheless we encourage guests to consult their

local doctors on anti-malarial medication and preparation. A repellent stick or spray is effective and should be utilised while on safari during the summer season.

### **What to pack**

Packing for your Kruger safari can be influenced by the time of year you are travelling. The varying seasons will determine what sort of clothing guests should bring, and which optional extras are advised. Some things don't change, regardless of the seasons, so we have put together a list of items guests should remember to pack:

- Throughout the year, we recommend packing lightweight, neutral-coloured clothing with short sleeves
- Bring sun protection in the form of sunblock, sun hats, and glasses.
- Scarfs, jackets and gloves are needed for early morning game drives, especially in winter.
- Comfortable walking shoes are essential, so that walking safaris can be done safely and comfortably.
- Bring along cameras, binoculars and recording gadgets to keep a record of the many wildlife sightings.
- Bring a good book (or a bird book!) for those lazy afternoons at the pool under the fig trees.
- Pack a swimsuit, especially if you are travelling in summer and weather is hot.