



Where to Go in 2026: These are the 11 Safari Lodges, Go2Africa is Most Excited to Book

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Cape Town, South Africa (August 04, 2025): [Go2Africa](#) is pleased to share a first look at the most anticipated safari lodge openings across the continent in 2026, an exciting new chapter for African travel. From Botswana's iconic Khwai floodplains to the rewilded landscapes of South Africa's Lowveld and the crater-rim vistas of northern Tanzania, these lodges reflect a growing appetite for experiences that are both luxurious and deeply rooted in place. Thoughtfully designed and often community-owned, each property offers guests not only refined comfort, but also meaningful access to untamed nature, rare wildlife, and vital conservation efforts. For Go2Africa's team of Africa-based experts, these openings signal more than just new places to stay. They mark a powerful evolution in safari travel, one that invites deeper connection, greater sustainability, and transformative discovery.

Namibia

[Thitaka Lodge \(Newmark\)](#)

Newmark's first venture into Namibia, Thitaka Lodge will **open in early 2026** along the Kwando River in Bwabwata National Park. Designed as the Caprivi's first true five-star base, this remote tented camp promises private-pool villas, year-round boat safaris, and guided bush walks through one of Namibia's most water-rich, biodiverse corners. Its unique position at the intersection of the Chobe, Okavango, and Zambezi river systems allows for seamless transitions between wetland and savannah, opening up a rarely explored corridor for intrepid travelers. With front-row access to seasonal elephant migrations and deep roots in a transfrontier conservation story, Thitaka offers an unfiltered window into the wild.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Justin Chapman shares, *"Located on the Kwando River in Bwabwata National Park, Thitaka unlocks the wetland corridor that links Chobe, the Okavango Delta and the Zambezi, letting travellers move between three major river systems – though logistics to do so need some thought. The camp also sits on the frontline of the elephant dispersal route from Botswana to Angola, offering a window onto a transfrontier conservation story. Being able to experience a popular destination country in a new and novel way makes this appealing."*

South Africa

Sandringham Private Game Reserve, Sabi Sabi

Opening in June 2026, Sandringham Private Game Reserve is a new addition to the Sabi Sabi Collection, located in the ecologically rich Timbavati region along the Timbavati River. Once used for hunting, the reserve has undergone significant restoration since its acquisition in 2022, with efforts focused on wildlife rehabilitation, removing old infrastructure, and creating open corridors that connect to Kruger National Park. The reserve will feature two exclusive camps—N’Weti and Shisaka—offering luxury safari experiences with minimal vehicle traffic and abundant sightings of the Big Five, white lions, and diverse birdlife. As part of Sabi Sabi’s broader conservation and community-driven mission, Sandringham aims to blend sustainable tourism with wilderness regeneration in one of South Africa’s most iconic landscapes.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Justin Chapman shares, *“The Sabi Sabi portfolio’s 4,500-ha rewilding project is transforming a former hunting block into a regenerative sanctuary where guests can watch habitats—and wildlife numbers—return in real time. The lodge will pair a conservation narrative with the established hospitality credentials, introducing sustainable ultra-luxury to the lowveld fringe of Limpopo, while linking in to the Greater Kruger conservation corridor, aligning with a key value for Go2Africa in the process.”*

Toro River Lodge, South Africa’s Limpopo Province (Newmark)

Opening in the first quarter of 2026, Toro River Lodge in South Africa’s Limpopo Province offers an exclusive five-suite retreat nestled along the scenic Makhustwi River. Guests can anticipate a luxury full-board safari experience featuring gourmet meals, expertly guided game drives, and immersive bush walks that delve into the heart of the wild. The lodge emphasizes intimate, off-the-beaten-track adventures, providing a chance to explore lesser-seen landscapes and wildlife beyond typical safari routes. With its blend of refined comfort and authentic adventure, Toro River Lodge promises a unique and exclusive escape into Limpopo’s untamed beauty.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Justin Chapman shares, *“With only five river-front suites, Toro River Lodge offers exclusive-use potential, off-road Big Five drives and guided safari walks within two hours of Hoedspruit. It fills the small-camp, high-exclusivity niche for multigenerational families who want the Kruger experience without the game-drive traffic that you might encounter in other Kruger reserves, and is accordingly one to watch in 2026.”*

RockFig Safari Lodge, Timbavati Private Reserve

Reopening in January 2026, RockFig Safari Lodge emerges as a reimagined sanctuary of comfort, sophistication, and serenity within the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve. Built near its original site, the new lodge will feature generously scaled indoor and outdoor living spaces, spa and wellness facilities, and private plunge pools for each suite, all with sweeping views of the wilderness. Known for its personal touch and strong guiding, RockFig is a favorite among safari veterans and travelers seeking an alternative to busier Kruger routes. This next chapter enhances its signature charm while adding layers of contemporary luxury.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Ashley Gerrand shares, *“RockFig is a strong addition to Go2Africa’s Kruger offering, providing a small, well-run lodge in the Timbavati for guests who prefer quieter, more personal stays. It allows us to offer more variety in the region, especially for travellers who’ve been on safari before or want something less busy. RockFig helps us show knowledge of places beyond the usual options and adds depth to the trips we can plan.”*

Kenya

Wilderness Mara (Wilderness Safaris)

Set to **open in June 2026**, Wilderness Mara is a refined reimagining of the iconic Little Governors’ Camp, positioned in a quiet bend of the Mara River within Kenya’s revered Mara Triangle. The 12-suite tented camp blends nostalgia with elegance, offering travelers a serene and immersive base for wildlife viewing in one of Africa’s richest game areas. Unique access to both banks of the Mara River allows for unparalleled game drives and the rare thrill of predator encounters without the crowds. Wilderness Mara is safari as it was always meant to be: soulful, still, and teeming with life.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Maureen Stover shares, *“There has always been a need for fresh, new looking luxury camps in the sought after, less crowded, Mara Triangle area. Formerly Little Governors’ Camp, now being completely rebuilt as Wilderness Mara, is such great news, as it has a fantastic location, but was not on par with what luxury travelers look for.”*

Shompole Camp, Great Plains Conservation

Reopening in mid-2026 under the stewardship of Great Plains Conservation, Shompole Camp returns as a member of the Réserve-Collection, promising barefoot luxury in one of Kenya’s most dramatic landscapes. Perched on the edge of the Great Rift escarpment, this boutique property will blend sustainability, privacy, and bold design, appealing to travelers seeking true escape. More details are forthcoming, but the return of this beloved camp signals a deepening of Kenya’s high-end conservation travel landscape.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Justin Chapman shares, *“The inclusion of Shompole will change the cadence of a Kenya itinerary: after the Mara, you swap more frenetic game viewing for big skies, cliff-edge vistas, and genuine breathing space. It’s where high-end travellers will be able to reset — unhurried days, discreet hospitality, and a slower rhythm of safari — with plenty of room for reflection. A fantastic addition to the Great Plains portfolio, it pairs wonderfully with the Mara or Chyulu Hills to add texture and depth.”*

JW Marriott Mount Kenya Rhino Reserve Safari Camp, Solio Game Reserve

Expected to **open in early 2026**, the JW Marriott Mount Kenya Rhino Reserve Safari Camp is poised to provide the perfect retreat for the mind, body, and soul, bringing the brand’s exceptional

service and sophisticated design to the heart of the Solio Game Reserve. Set between the majestic slopes of Mount Kenya and the peaks of the Aberdare Mountains, this sanctuary will offer an immersive wildlife experience within the 45,000-acre game reserve, and 19,000-acre Solio Ranch Conservancy. Internationally recognised for its successful rhino breeding program, the conservancy provides unparalleled encounters with white and endangered black rhinos, along with other indigenous wildlife including leopards, cheetahs, and plains game.

The camp is expected to feature 20 luxurious tented units, including two two-bedroom suites, each with a private plunge pool. Design plans include multiple tranquil wellness spaces inviting guests to fully embrace the present moment including the brand's signature JW Garden, along with four culinary experiences including a traditional restaurant and a sky deck dining venue. Additionally, the property will offer a signature Spa by JW, swimming pool, fitness centre, conservation house, horse barn, retail boutique, and animal viewing hide. A wide range of experiences will be offered including guided horse-riding safaris, night game drives, guided nature walks, quad biking across the Solio plains, and visits to a private rhino orphanage.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Ashley Gerrand shares, *"A timely addition for Go2Africa's conservation storytelling. Combining rare wildlife and five-star comfort in a fresh region. Solio Ranch is one of Africa's most important private rhino sanctuaries, and now with JW Marriott's entry, it becomes a high-end conservation experience with a globally trusted luxury brand attached."*

Tanzania

Laba Ngorongoro Lodge, Ngorongoro Conservation

Opening in February 2026, Laba Ngorongoro Lodge brings elevated design and immersive access to one of Africa's most legendary settings. Perched on the rim of the Ngorongoro Crater at 2,200 metres, the lodge offers panoramic views and immediate access to the crater floor for early morning game drives. Guests can also explore the Olduvai Gorge, nearby highlands, and Lake Manyara, while enjoying the rare comfort of air-conditioned suites and walking safari options. Laba is ideal for those who want to stay close to the action, without compromising on privacy or sophistication.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Maureen Stover shares, *"Go2Africa is excited about this option as there are only a handful of luxury lodge options on or close to the Ngorongoro Crater rim. Bordering the crater's rim and now being the closest lodge to the park entrance means quick access for our travellers when doing an early morning Ngorongoro crater tour. Deluxe Rooms that have air-conditioning are very unique for a Tanzania lodge – something some travelers assist on, and we have been struggling to offer. Offering walking safaris is also out of the norm for a Ngorongoro crater accommodation."*

Botswana

[Sediba Sa Rona \(Desert & Delta\), Khwai Concessio](#)

Sediba Sa Rona, the newest gem in the Desert & Delta Safaris collection, is set to **open in March 2026** within the Khwai Concession, celebrated as “The Meeting Point of Iconic Ecosystems” and home to some of Botswana’s largest wildlife concentrations. This spectacular property promises immersive luxury, surrounded by a convergence of floodplains, woodlands, and riverine habitats. Guests can expect exceptional wildlife encounters, from prolific herds and predators to abundant birdlife, all from the comfort of an exclusive, beautifully designed lodge. With its prime location and upscale offerings, Sediba Sa Rona is poised to become a standout safari destination in Botswana.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Justin Chapman shares, *“Opening on the community-run Khwai Concession, this solar-powered, 15-tent rebuild completes Desert & Delta’s circuit from Chobe through Savute and Moremi to the Boteti River—enabling seamless itineraries across northern Botswana. On their stay here, guests can combine mokoro excursions, night drives and scenic heli flights with a riverside spa while directly supporting Khwai village through the concession model. Concessionary areas that allow for game drives was a gap in the portfolio that has been well filled.”*

[Singita Elela, Okavango Delta](#)

Set to open in 2026, Singita Elela promises a new pinnacle of safari luxury within a vast 170,000-hectare private concession in the Okavango Delta. Designed to mirror the Delta’s fluidity, this bold new camp combines organic architecture with rare solitude and scale. From seasonal floodplains and papyrus-fringed waterways to untouched grasslands, the region offers extraordinary biodiversity and breathtaking light. Elela will speak to those in search of beauty, purpose, and absolute immersion in one of Africa’s last great wildernesses.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Ashley Gerrand shares, *“Singita Elela brings something truly exciting to Go2Africa’s Botswana portfolio. A new level of luxury with a clear conservation focus in one of Africa’s most pristine regions. As a new opening from one of the continent’s most respected lodge brands, it gives us the chance to offer our most experienced and high-value travellers something fresh, rare, and meaningful. Elela allows us to deepen our Botswana expertise while catering to guests looking for exclusivity, space, and purpose. All in one place.”*

Uganda

[Erebero Hills, Bwindi \(Asilia Africa\)](#)

Opening in early 2026, Erebero Hills, named for “a place where you can see far,” is a contemporary retreat on the northern fringe of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. Set across 45 acres of reforested land, the lodge combines sweeping views with sustainable design and offers effortless access to gorilla trekking, Batwa community visits, and forest hikes. Asilia’s first Ugandan property brings a thoughtful new dimension to the country’s luxury circuit, pairing conservation focus with aesthetic intention in one of East Africa’s most profound landscapes.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Ashley Gerrand shares, “ *This new lodge opens new potential for Uganda itineraries that blend design-forward luxury with conservation and community-led travel. It gives Go2Africa an opportunity to elevate Uganda's positioning. Pairing Erebero with Rwanda creates a seamless, high-touch East African circuit.* ”

Zimbabwe

Bupenyu Luxury Boutique Lodge, Victoria Falls (Newmark Hotels)

Opening in December 2025, Bupenyu Lodge is a cliffside haven poised 180 metres above the Batoka Gorge, just 28km from Victoria Falls. This 11-suite boutique lodge, including a private villa, offers plunge pools, cantilevered decks, and dramatic views of the Zambezi. Guests can dine on the edge of the gorge, relax at a hilltop spa, or arrive by helicopter, setting a new standard for Falls-area stays. Grounded in regenerative design, Bupenyu transforms Victoria Falls from a stopover into a destination in its own right.

Why Go2Africa is excited:

Justin Chapman shares, “*Perched 180 m above Batoka Gorge, Bupenyu's 11 cliff-edge suites with plunge pools and private butler service put the focus on Victoria Falls as a multi-night highlight to a trip rather than a quick photo stop. This luxury stop fits a market otherwise dominated by the more traditional lodge arrangements within the National Parks surrounding Victoria Falls. Helicopter transfers straight to the lodge, unforgettable gorge-edge dining and a hill-top spa open up the Falls into being either a restorative retreat or an adrenaline base for microlight flights, white-water rafting and gorge swings.*”

As Africa continues to evolve as a luxury travel frontier, these 2026 lodge openings promise once-in-a-lifetime experiences grounded in purpose, beauty, and discovery. To explore these extraordinary destinations and begin planning a personalized journey, visit www.go2africa.com or connect with one of Go2Africa's three featured Africa Safari Experts, each with unmatched insight and firsthand experience on the ground and what's to come for 2026.

About Go2Africa

Go2Africa, part of the Nawiri Group, has been crafting personalized African safaris for over 25 years. With deep local connections and first-hand knowledge, the team personally visits every destination, accommodation, and experience they recommend. Based in Cape Town since 1998, Go2Africa has created seamless and unforgettable journeys for over 200,000 travellers. Recognised by Condé Nast Traveler, Travel + Leisure, and the World Travel Awards, the company offers expert guidance with 24/7 support. Every journey supports Africa's people and ecosystems, ensuring that travel makes a positive impact. With Go2Africa, it's not just a safari – it's the greatest adventure.

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