



# RIDE WORLD WIDE

## South Africa

### Wait a Little Safaris 2012

#### Ride Information Sheet

Wait a Little Safaris is owned by Philip and Gerti Kusseler and operates in over 30,000 hectares of unspoilt conservation area close to South Africa's Kruger National Park and about 320 miles north east of Johannesburg. The Wait a Little base is on an 8,500 hectare private game reserve, with the Drakensberg Mountains a magnificent backdrop and ecosystems that range from open plains, woodland and rocky 'kopjes', to gullies and riverine bush. The reserve supports an impressive population of plant, bird and animal life. The area is home to the 'Big Five' and morning, afternoon and day rides provide wonderful opportunities to watch all manner of game at remarkably close quarters. Giraffe, zebra, elephant, rhino and cheetah are often seen; there are hippo and crocodile in the dams and late afternoon game drives are wonderful chances to view leopard, hyena and lion and other nocturnal animals close up. For those who wish to see big game, the 7 night 'Big 5 Safari', which combines 4 nights at the main Wait a Little camp with a night in a basic fly camp and 2 nights at the very comfortable Phiva Camp in the 24,000 hectare Makalali Reserve, is an excellent choice and a good introduction to Africa. There is also a shorter 5 night version the 'Big 5 Camp Safari' with 4 nights at the base and 1 night fly camp. For those with more time, the 9 night Makalali-Garonga Safari also explores more of the Makalali Reserve and includes nights in three different luxury lodges and safari camps en route.



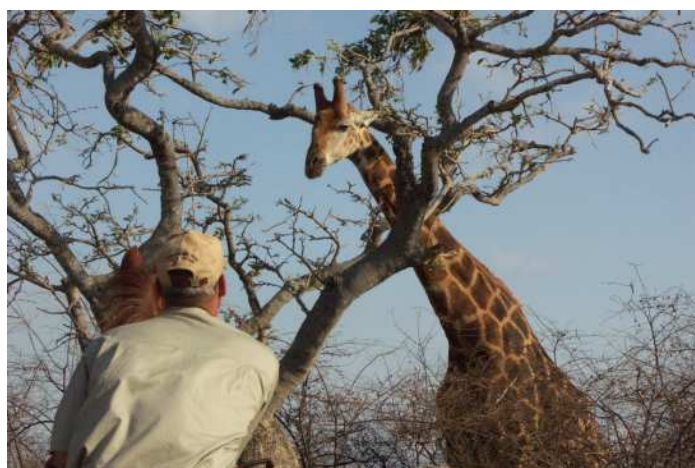
**Dates** Safaris at Wait a Little are run year round. Big 5 Safaris run from Saturday to Saturday throughout the year with departures subject to a minimum of 3 participants. Big 5 Camp Safaris are run on request for 4 participants. 9 night Makalali-Garonga Safaris are run on request for groups of 5 or more or from occasional set dates. All safaris are limited to a maximum of 7 participants. Please contact us to discuss dates, your plans and availability.

**The Horses** There are over 30 horses at the Wait a Little base, all between about 14.3hh and 17hh. They include local South African breeds such as Boerperds and Boerperd crosses, as well as Warmbloods, Thoroughbred and crossbreds. All are experienced safari horses, responsive to ride, extremely good-natured, well schooled and well mannered. Gerti, an excellent dressage rider, personally schools all the horses regularly ensuring they are fit, supple and responsive to ride. The horses are also used to the bush, spending much time grazing loose in the reserve and are very sure footed, coping easily with the sometimes rough and rocky terrain. There are helpers and grooms on hand at the Wait a Little base who travel with you to the different camps and lodges, to tack up, untack and look after the horses.

**Riding** There is usually between 4 and 7 hours riding a day on these safaris, broken up with refreshment stops and a break for lunch. Rides are generally limited to a maximum of 7 guests and are usually lead by Philip, an experienced, enthusiastic and hugely knowledgeable guide. There is also usually a back up rider. Saddles used are dressage or long distance endurance saddles and the horses are ridden in snaffles (one or two in rubber pelhams). Saddle-bags are provided as well as sheepskins / seat savers for extra comfort. Riding is English style with horses encouraged to walk out actively and remain alert and riders encouraged to keep a constant leg contact and to use a forward seat at the canter. There is a rider weight limit of 95 kgs / about 15 stone on the safaris - although riders are also expected to be fit with weight in proportion to height as the riding can be quite energetic!

**Pace** The riding pace on the safaris is varied and depends on the terrain, but overall it is moderate to fast, and well balanced. In places the going on the reserves you cross is covered in thick vegetation and there maybe some ascents to negotiate where you have to ride slowly, but there are also open areas and long sandy tracks that are good for fast canters and gallops. There are also often energetic, sporty canters weaving through fairly thick bush, so participants must be fit and well balanced in the saddle.

**Riding Experience** To participate in a safari you must be a competent rider as you are riding in an open area where there is big game including elephant and lion. You should be comfortable and in control on a horse at all paces (including long canters and some fast gallops) and should be used to riding in open country over varied terrain. You should also be relaxed and secure in the saddle so you are able to stay on your horse if it reacts suddenly, or needs to move quickly out of trouble. You will enjoy your safari much more if you are fairly riding fit and if you do not ride regularly, should accustom yourself to the time you will spend in the saddle with regular training before you go. Your guide reserves the right to dismount any rider who he feels is not competent and who poses a danger to the rest of the group. Children over 12 years old are welcome on these safaris but only at the operator's discretion. They must be strong, competent riders and to ensure this, a Pony Club test certificate might be required.



**Terrain** The Karongwe Private Game Reserve where Wait a Little is situated and the neighbouring Makalali Reserve, are in South Africa's 'lowveld', close to the Kruger National Park with the northern tip of the Drakensberg mountains as a back drop. This is an area of varying ecosystems and a natural habitat for a wide range of flora, fauna, birds and game. Much of the region is covered in quite dense bush and thorn scrub, there are riverine gullies, huge fig and Jackal berry trees and lush, exotic vegetation along the banks of the rivers. Rocky 'kopjes' - small hills that are very typical of Africa - are dotted across the plains and provide wonderful viewpoints and sandy tracks, old fence lines and in the dry season, sandy river beds, all provide good going for fast riding. In places the terrain is rough as you climb in and out of rocky gorges but the horses negotiate this with ease.

**Game** The Karongwe Private Game Reserve is home to the 'Big Five' - lion, elephant, leopard, rhino and buffalo - and you are likely to see all of these during your stay. You may also see cheetah, hyena, wild dog, jackal, warthog, mongoose, crocodiles, hippo and herbivores such as wildebeest, zebra, giraffe, kudu, eland, impala, bushbuck, steenbok, duiker and waterbuck. Nocturnal game sometimes seen includes ardvark, civet, caracal, serval, porcupine and spring hare. The Reserve is quite small and compact and, although the bush is thick in places, the game is used to riders and game drive vehicles so you have a very good chance of seeing many different species amazingly close up.

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**Game cont** Makalali Reserve also boasts similar game including the Big Five and is known as one of finest private game reserves in the world so there is always plenty of wildlife to see. Philip is qualified to the South African Field Guides Association highest level (SKS (special skills / dangerous game). His enthusiasm is infectious and it makes the thrill of tracking animals through the bush a wonderfully memorable experience.



**Accommodation** Accommodation at Wait a Little's base is in large walk-in canvas safari tents, set on wooden platforms overlooking the Makhutswe river. Tents are set away from each other for privacy and each has its own veranda, a comfortable double bed made up with cotton sheets, pillows and duvets (an extra bed is included when a double bed is not required) and an outside bathroom (attached by a short walkway and generally under cover but open at the sides) with flush loo and shower with hot and cold running water and a bath overlooking the river. The camp has electricity and is small and intimate, sleeping a maximum of 7 guests. There is a "Rondavel" (round hut), which is reserved for single travelers, situated in the garden with its own bathroom. There is also a central lodge, the original farmhouse, with sitting room, dining area and well stocked bar. The house overlooks the river and with a small swimming pool close by, is an ideal spot for R&R after an exciting ride. There is also a small gift shop and a massage room. On the 7 night Big 5 Safari 3 different camps are used. 4 nights are spent at the main base camp, one night is at Beacon Rock Camp and 2 nights are in the very comfortable Phiva Camp on Makalali Reserve. Beacon Rock is a simple camp situated on a rock formation, the highest point in the surrounding area, with a magnificent view. When staying here riders sleep on mattresses set up on the rocks under the stars or under a shelter, enjoying the night sounds of the bush. In complete contrast Phiva camp is a stunning architect designed camp in the Makalali Reserve. Designed by Silvio Rech, one of Africa's most famous architects, the camp sleeps up to 12 guests in 6 comfortable double cottages, each with air conditioning, its own en-suite bathroom (outdoor under thatch) with flush loo, shower and hot and cold running water, and private raised deck ('sala') which doubles as a day room or viewing platform. Rech's inspiration for the camp was Africa's earthy colours and it is built using materials such as raw timber, clay, reed and thatch and is decorated in African style. It also has a swimming pool with raised decking platform for meals, sunbathing and game viewing. The 5 night Big 5 Camp Safaris miss out the 2 nights at Phiva Camp. On Makalali-Garonga Safaris the first 3 nights are at the Wait a Little main camp and then you spend 2 nights at Phiva before riding to the equally luxurious Garonga Safari Camp for 3 nights, another oasis in the bush, designed to reflect the textures of the earth with its thick earthen columns, billowing white fabrics and generous cushions on low beds. Garonga is a haven of stylish tranquillity and comfortable tented bedrooms have fabric-draped double beds, bathrooms with indoor and outdoor showers and some with outdoor freestanding baths. Garonga also has a swimming pool and treatments such as massage and aromatherapy are available at an extra charge. Safari rates are based on twin accommodation and a single supplement is charged if you are not prepared to share with another (same sex) guest if the safari is full.



**Meals** You will be extremely well fed on safari with three delicious home cooked meals a day. There is usually a light breakfast before your morning ride, for instance tea or coffee with cereal and toast, butter and jam. Lunches are usually a combination of fresh salads, home made bread, pizza or quiche, together with a selection of cold meats or fish. A three-course dinner is served in the evening, a carefully thought out menu with a main course of something like venison, fish if available or pasta and often a delicious barbeque cooked over an open fire. Menus are varied and all the food is freshly prepared from good local ingredients. There are plenty of vegetables and salads as well as excellent local meat and meals are usually eaten at the long central dining table or on chairs seated around the camp-fire. All drinks are included on safari except champagne and drinks when staying at Phiva Camp and there is a well stocked bar with a selection of good quality South African wine, beer, spirits and cold drinks available.



**Safety** There will be an introductory talk on the routine in the camp and safety when riding, explaining how to handle big game situations, when you first arrive. The guide carries a radio and also a rifle. All camps and vehicles on the Reserve also have radio contact and there are research teams monitoring the big game who also carry radios in case of emergencies. A back up rider accompanies each group and a first aid kit is carried on all rides. There is also a comprehensive first aid kit and stretchers at the main base camp (the nearest hospital is 45 minutes drive).

**Weather** The area is blessed with almost year round sunshine and this makes it a wonderful place to ride throughout the year. Summer is October to March when midday temperatures are between 24 and 35 degrees C. At this time of year you will ride when it is cool in the early morning or late afternoon, with a traditional African siesta in the middle of the day. This is the rainy season and heavy cloud build up followed by showers or short sharp afternoon thunderstorms are possible. Autumn is April and May when days are usually pleasantly warm and dry with temperatures in the 20's C. The bush can be very pretty at this time of year as the leaves change colour. It begins to cool down, particularly at night, in May. June to September is winter, the dry season, and although it is usually warm with clear skies and daytime temperatures around 20 -25 degrees C, it gets quite cool when the sun goes down. Night-time temperatures in winter can drop to 4 or 5 degrees C.

**What to bring** We will send you suggestions of what to bring when you make your booking.

**Itineraries** The following are examples of the itineraries planned for the 7 night Big 5 Safari and for the 9 night Makalali-Garonga Safari. The Big 5 Camp Safari is the same as the standard Big 5 Safari but excluding the visit to the Makalali Reserve / nights at Phiva Camp. Please note that they are only examples and the day by day arrangements may be altered by your guides in their absolute discretion if the weather, movement or game or other local conditions require.

### **Example Itinerary - Big 5 Safari**

**Day 1** You will be met at either Hoedspruit, Phalaborwa or Johannesburg airport and driven to the Wait A Little base, about a 45 minute drive from Hoedspruit and Phalaborwa and about a 5 hour drive from Johannesburg International. Meet your hosts Philip & Gerti when you arrive at the camp and after being shown to your tents and time to settle in, join them for a light lunch or afternoon tea. There will then be an introductory talk on the camp and safety procedures when riding and after this, time to meet the horses and for a short orientation ride to try them. This ride will take you through the area that surrounds the camp giving you a chance to get used to the horses and riding style and perhaps even to see your first giraffe or zebra. Return to camp for sundowners looking out towards the Drakensberg Mountains and then after a hot shower, relax over a delicious dinner with handpicked South African wines. Your first night listening to the night sounds of the bush at Wait a Little base camp (L,D).

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**Day 2** Woken with tea or coffee in the morning, then, after a light breakfast, set off riding in search of game! If it is cool you will ride out, with a picnic carried in saddle-bags, to visit Croc Dam. Crocodiles, fish eagles, hippos and lots of water birds are often seen in this dam, the biggest on the reserve. Stop for a picnic lunch and siesta under a large shady tree with a chance to watch the hippo wallowing and fish eagle swooping down into the water. Mount up to ride home to the Wait a Little base, following a different route, looking for animal tracks and perhaps detouring to track and watch game on the way. Dinner and night at Wait-a-Little. (B,L,D)

**Day 3** Breakfast and an early morning ride, perhaps searching for leopard or wild dog that have been heard calling in the night. After an exciting morning ride, return to base for a leisurely lunch on the terrace and the afternoon free to unwind by the pool, or for a session with Mandi, the resident aromatherapist. After tea, in the late afternoon, set off by vehicle to search for buffalo. The buffalo on the reserve are disease free and are kept in a separate fenced area for breeding and research purposes. There will be a stop for a sundowner close to the herd – the buffalo are curious about visitors and often come very close! Return to the Wait a Little base for dinner and the night. (B,L,D)

**Day 4** Set off early when game viewing is best. Whatever tracks Philip finds he will try to follow so you may end up watching elephant feeding on the huge palm trees and tall reeds found on the banks of the Kufunyame River or watching a cheetah hunt or relax on a giant termite mound. Return to Wait a Little for lunch and then in the afternoon set off riding to a 'fly' camp set up at Beacon Rock, a huge rock formation which gives a superb view of the whole Lowveld escarpment. The luggage will be taken by vehicle and the route you follow takes you south between twin rock formations of lion and leopard hill and along gently undulating roads which are perfect for a long, rhythmic canter. Dinner is simple but delicious - perhaps steak or chops cooked over the open fire and served with baked potatoes, salads and good wine! The night is spent under the stars, around a campfire, surrounded by the horses, listening to the call of the hyenas and jackals. (B,L,D)



**Day 5** Breakfast in camp and set off on the longest ride of the week. Today you ride into the Greater Makalali reserve, dominated by open plains where you might find yourself cantering next to giraffe, zebra or wildebeest. Ride on to Phiva, home for the next two nights and a truly spectacular camp, built and designed by Silvio Rech, one of Africa's most famous architects. Silvio's inspiration came from the colours of Africa and the camp seems to have grown out of the African Bush. Lunch in camp, followed by a welcome siesta before meeting for tea and a late afternoon game drive on Makalali searching for lion. On the return a spot light will help you see nocturnal species such as bushbabies, owls and perhaps even leopard. A delicious dinner outside by the dam or in the large Boma and the night at Phiva (B,L,D)

**Day 6** The morning ride takes you to explore some wilder areas of the Makalali reserve, with chances for some fun canters, twisting, turning and changing direction at every stride between the trees. The horses are nimble and sure-footed and enjoy this as much as riders and here and there a tree felled by an elephant, provides an irresistible jump or perhaps an eland or kudu will pop out of the bush to show the way ahead. Climbing a small hill you will find mile after mile of unspoiled Africa stretching away before you and there is time to pause for thought before returning to Phiva for lunch on the veranda, watching antelope such as nyala and waterbuck roaming the river system. After lunch and a siesta, ride to a nearby dam where hippo rest during the heat of the day and where there may also be crocodile resting on the sandbanks. Perhaps enjoy a sundowner whilst watching them play, then return to Phiva camp for dinner and the night. (B,L,D)

**Day 7** Breakfast and leaving Phiva camp, begin the long ride back to Wait a Little. There is plenty of game around and you may encounter elephant, rhino, lion or giraffe on the way, following the tracks of whatever game you find. Lunch when you arrive at the main camp, then a siesta. In the evening, ride out for a last sundowner on one of the open 'flays'. Return to camp for hot showers and then a special farewell dinner - perhaps game such as kudu or ostrich with pasta and a sherry sauce. Final night at Wait a Little. (B,L,D)

**Day 8** An early start and the chance for a short, sporty ride before your transfer back to the airport for your onward journey. (B)

### **Example Itinerary - Makalali-Garonga Safari**

**Day 1** You will be met at either Hoedspruit, Phalaborwa or Johannesburg airport and driven to the Wait A Little base, about a 45 minute drive from Hoedspruit and Phalaborwa and about a 5 hour drive from Johannesburg International. Meet your hosts Philip & Gerti when you arrive at the camp and after being shown to your tents and time to settle in, join them for a light lunch or afternoon tea. There will then be an introductory talk on the camp and safety procedures when riding and after this, time to meet the horses and for a short orientation ride to try them. This ride will take you through the area that surrounds the camp giving you a chance to get used to the horses and riding style and perhaps even to see your first giraffe or zebra. Return to camp for sundowners looking out towards the Drakensberg Mountains and then after a hot shower, relax over a delicious dinner with handpicked South African wines. Your first night listening to the night sounds of the bush at Wait a Little base camp (L,D).

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**Day 6** Today set off riding in a northerly direction to another part of the reserve and the luxuries of Garonga safari camp, tucked into the edge of a steep cliff overlooking a tributary of the river. A long morning ride cantering across the plains and up and down the valleys between camps, brings you to Garonga in time for lunch. After several days of concentrated riding, you have a chance to pamper yourself this afternoon with an optional aromatherapy treatment, a long siesta or even a 'bush bath' set in the veldt where you can soak your muscles in deep bubbles whilst listening to the sounds of the bush! Sundowners around a glowing camp fire before another excellent dinner and the night at Garonga (B,L,D)



**Day 7** After yesterday's relaxing afternoon, a full day's ride today heads towards Garonga's tree house. The route takes you over one of the highest points of the reserve, giving a wonderful bird's eye view before descending through deep bush to a hippo dam and lunch quite literally half way up a Marula tree! The horses wait below and in the afternoon ride back by a different route to Garonga for dinner and the night. (B,L,D)

**Day 8** Breakfast and a morning ride exploring the reserve and perhaps searching for a particular game species that you have not yet seen – or more sightings that you have particularly enjoyed! Perhaps elephant snoozing in the reed beds or a rhino having a mud bath. Return to camp for lunch and a siesta by the pool. In the afternoon you may want to take a break from riding and to explore on foot or by vehicle - or just to spend the afternoon relaxing by the pool! Dinner and the night at Garonga. (B,L,D)

**Day 9** Breakfast and leaving Garonga, begin the long ride back to Wait a Little. There is plenty of game around and you may encounter elephant, rhino, lion or giraffe on the way. Lunch when you arrive at the main camp, then a siesta. In the evening ride out for a last sundowner on one of the open 'flays' and then a special farewell dinner - perhaps game such as kudu or ostrich with pasta and a sherry sauce. Night at Wait a Little. (B,L,D)

**Day 10** An early start and the chance for a short, sporty ride before a transfer back to the airport for your onward journey. (B) [Or, those wishing can stay for an additional night at Wait a Little]

**2012 DATES and RATES:-****Set Dates 2012**

**Big 5 Safaris** - Saturday to Saturday year round (safaris operate most weeks but not all, with most of January closed except for group bookings on request - please enquire).

**Big 5 Camp Safaris** - groups of 4, on request (once a date is confirmed others may join - please enquire)

**The Makalali -Garonga Safari** - 21st to 30th April 2012

Other dates can sometimes be arranged on request for private groups of 4 to 6 people.

**Rates:**

**7 night Big 5 Safari - £2520 per person**

**5 night Big 5 Camp Safari - £1750 per person**

**9 night Makalali -Garonga Safari - £3330 per person**

There is a 20% discount on the above rates for children 12 to 16 years (minimum age 12 years)

These rates **INCLUDE** all riding, guiding and equipment, two game drives during the safari, 5 / 7 / 9 nights twin accommodation (single only if supplement paid or if otherwise available), all meals and drinks (except drinks when staying at Phiva Camp and champagne at Wait a Little / Garonga) and laundry service at the Wait a Little base camp.

They **EXCLUDE** international flights to Johannesburg and taxes, onward connections to Phalaborwa or Hoedspruit and taxes, transfers between airports and the Wait a Little base, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), Makalali Gate Fee (130 Rand, approx £13), supplements for a single room, drinks at Phiva, champagne and any premium drinks at Wait a little / Garonga, any visa fees, extra game drives / non-included activities, massages and aromatherapy treatments (these can be pre-booked) and any tips you may wish to leave staff.

**Travel / flight information** - The nearest international airport to Wait a Little is Johannesburg. British Airways, South African Airways and Virgin all have direct daily flights from London to Johannesburg, normally departing London in the evening (around 20.00) and arriving Johannesburg early the next morning (around 08.00). You can also fly via Europe (eg with Air France, KLM, Al Italia) although we strongly recommend a direct flight to minimize the risk of delays. Airfares vary depending on the airline you choose and the season, but expect to pay around £650 to £900 per person for a London / Johannesburg economy return.

From Johannesburg you need to connect with a flight either to Phalaborwa or Hoedspruit airports in South Africa and we will arrange a vehicle transfer from these airports to the main Wait a Little camp for you. Transfers take about 45 minutes to an hour and are charged at £45 per person each way from Hoedspruit and £65 from Phalaborwa. Please note that transfer rates are subject to change at any time.

South African Airlines have daily flights from Johannesburg to both Phalaborwa and Hoedspruit, usually adding about £120 to £130 (return) to the international airfare. For an economy return flight London to Hoedspruit, via Johannesburg you should therefore budget about £800 to £1000 (varies with the season and availability). Alternatively you can fly to Nelspruit, about a 2 ½ hour drive from Wait A Little - the transfer from here costs £120 each way per person assuming 2 people sharing. Or you may like to hire a car and drive yourself from Johannesburg to Wait a Little. We can also arrange an overland transfer all the way from Johannesburg - this take about 5 hours and the cost is about £240 per person each way assuming 2 people sharing the transport.





**We would be very happy to advise further on and to book flights for you (our ATOL number for flight bookings is 6213) so please contact us for details and a quote.**

Please note that transfer rates are subject to change and should be confirmed when you book.

**Single rooms** - The above safari rates are based on two people sharing a room / tent. If you are travelling alone and are not prepared to share with another guest of the same sex then you can request the single 'Rondavel'. This is booked on a first come, "first come, first served" basis and if it is not available then you will need to pay a 50% supplement to guarantee a single tent. Please note that this is not compulsory for single bookings, but it will normally be charged if you are NOT prepared to share if necessary. **NB** Accommodation at Phiva Camp, Makaklali is in double beds (not twin) so we recommend that those travelling alone pay a £120 supplement for single accommodation on the 2 nights spent here.

**General visa and health information** (NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking)

**Visas** If you hold a full British Passport and are visiting for a holiday only and staying less than 90 days you do not need to arrange a visa in advance.

**Health** No inoculations are legally required for entry to South Africa from Europe but inoculations against Tetanus and Hepatitis A are recommended and also against Typhoid, Cholera and Yellow Fever in some circumstances. Wait a Little is in an area that is considered low risk for Malaria, however it is usually recommended that you take malaria tablets. You should always consult a health professional for further and more detailed advice

**(Updated 15/05/11)**

