



# RIDE WORLD WIDE

## BOTSWANA

### HORIZON HORSEBACK MASHATU 2026

#### RIDE INFORMATION

Horizon Horseback Mashatu operates in eastern Botswana's Mashatu Game Reserve, part of the Tuli block which borders South Africa and the Limpopo River. Horizon Mashatu offer riding on 2 different safaris: 7 night 'Tuli Safaris' are based throughout on the Mashatu Reserve, and combined 'African Explorer Safaris' include 3 or 4 days in Mashatu and a few days before this riding in South Africa. The information below covers Tuli Safaris - please see our separate African Explorer Information for details of those safaris.

The Tuli block is a stunning place to ride. Known as the 'Land of Giants' for its large population of elephant and massive Baobab and Mashatu trees and renowned for its striking geography, the terrain varies from thick thorn scrub and tall leadwood, Mashatu and fever trees lining the Limpopo River, to vast semi-arid plains with spectacular rocky 'kopjes' and sandstone outcrops that jut into the horizon. There are signs of occupation by ancient African civilisations and the area was a strategic 'buffer' zone in the Anglo Boer war. Run by a dedicated, enthusiastic and friendly team, who between them have many years of horse, game and hospitality experience, Tuli Safaris will tick many boxes on your riding safari 'wish list' - they offer exciting, professionally guided riding on quality horses, thrilling game viewing, generous hospitality and comfortable camps, all in a beautiful and little visited area.



#### DATES

7 night safaris are run pretty much year round with start dates on Saturdays and Mondays. Please contact Ride World Wide for availability.

## HORSES

The horses used are owned by Horizon Mashatu which keep about 70 at their Botswana stables. They are mainly native South African breeds and crossbreeds that include Boerperds, South African Warmbloods and TB crosses. They are between about 14.3hh and 17hh, are tough and sure-footed, ideally suited to the Tuli's harsh environment and varying terrain. They are looked after with great care by a team of grooms, who prepare them for rides, and are regularly schooled to ensure they are an enjoyable, responsive and forward going ride. Used to being ridden in the classic English style, they are also easy to neck rein and go well when ridden with relaxed contact with the mouth.

## TACK

Saddles are McClellan style (quite similar to western) and comfortable for both horse and rider over long distances, with a few English and Australian stock saddles sometimes available on request. Saddle-bags are provided where necessary.



## RIDING

Safaris normally include about 5 ½ hours riding each day, with a shorter 'trial' ride on the first day and a shorter morning ride on the last. Two different itineraries are followed, both of which aim to cover about 150 kms during the week and approximately 20-30 kms each full day, although the daily programme and exact route ridden always depends on weather and game. Usually guests start riding at day-break, when it is cool and game is most active, finishing in time for lunch, then enjoying another game viewing activity or perhaps riding again in the late afternoon until sunset. Riding groups are usually limited to 8 guests (unless a private group particularly wish to ride together) although very occasionally up to 10 riders may be taken, split into 2 riding groups. Rides are lead by a qualified professional guide, accompanied by an assistant back-up rider. All guests are required to wear a hard hat when riding.

## WEIGHT LIMIT

Usually 85kg (13st 4lbs) but up to 95kgs (about 15 stone) with prior notice. Please contact us if you are over 85kgs to check suitable horses are available.

## PACE

The pace depends on the terrain and vegetation but generally riding is at an energetic and well-varied pace with opportunities for long trots and canters, zig-zagging through the scrub or across open plains. There are, of course, also places where you have to ride slowly - if the bush is thick, if it is rocky, up and down steep riverbanks or if the sand is thick. Riders are encouraged to spread out where terrain and vegetation allows, but where the going or safety with game requires, you'll be expected to stay in line, riding one behind the other.

## RIDING EXPERIENCE

Tuli Safaris are aimed at reasonably competent and confident riders. Riding is in an open, wilderness area where there is 'big' (and potentially dangerous) game including elephant and lion and to participate you should be a capable English style rider of a strong intermediate standard or above. Although you don't have to be an expert over jumps or in competition (there are sometimes opportunities to jump small logs etc if you wish - but you can always go around) you should be comfortable, balanced and **able to independently control a well-schooled horse at all paces** (including long fast trots and canters). You should also be used to riding with a group, in open country over varied, sometimes tricky terrain and 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. **All riders will be asked to take part in a short, informal riding assessment** on the first day to check competency before being allowed on safari (- the horses are all calm and well-schooled to do as asked, but if you do not meet the required minimum standard you will not be allowed to join the safari). You will always enjoy your safari much more if you are fairly riding fit and if you do not ride regularly, we recommend you accustom yourself to the saddle hours with concentrated training before you go. The minimum age for safaris is 12 years (strictly **no** children under 12 years) and **cont. over**

## RIDING EXPERIENCE cont.

children must be strong, competent riders. Acceptance of children is on a 'case by case' basis at the manager's discretion so please check with us first if you wish to travel with children.

## CYCLING OPTION FOR NON-RIDERS

On certain Tuli Safaris non-riders wishing to join a partner, family or friends, can book onto a cycling programme run alongside the horse safari. However because of access restrictions on the Reserve, non-riders cannot be taken unless participating in a fixed cycling programme. Cycling programmes are tailored to suit each group - either relaxed rides that could cover 15- 25km in a morning, or more advanced, covering up to 40km a day. The pace on both is generally easy going with regular breaks for game viewing, a picnic lunch and (usually!) the option to opt out at a mid-morning break if necessary.

## TERRAIN

The terrain in the Tuli includes dry, open sandy plains that are dotted with acacia trees and granite outcrops, dense forests of mopani trees, groves of fever and Mashatu trees and the winding, Limpopo River. In winter, April / May to September / October, the river-bed is often completely dry and the whole region is semi-desert. In summer, after seasonal rains, it can be wet and very green with the Limpopo River running strongly and pronounced vegetation types - riverine forest, acacia woodland, open grassy plains and true savannah - creating a very different environment.



## GAME

The Tuli is a well-known habitat for elephant and is also known for its population of eland, the largest of the antelope as well as other African 'giants' - giraffe, lion and the huge kori bustard. There are also many different species of plains game in the area including impala, wildebeest, zebra, kudu and nyala, predators such as hyena, leopard and cheetah and also monkeys, baboons, warthogs and crocodiles. Game is present year round although June to October, the drier months when there is no grass cover and vegetation is thin, are usually the best months for game viewing. Bird life is prolific with about 300 species visiting or breeding in the area and birds of prey often seen hunting over the open plains. During a safari there are occasional opportunities for a guided bush walk or game drive, the latter at extra cost but an ideal opportunity to see predators such as big cats close up. There is also usually plenty of time to relax in the late afternoon and for bird watching from camp.

## ACCOMMODATION

Tuli Safaris follow a figure of eight route. Two or three nights are at the main safari base, Two Mashatus Camp, a comfortable, semi-permanent base camp at the confluence of the Limpopo and Majale Rivers. The camp has five spacious twin / double 'East African' style guest tents, raised on teak decking, with comfortable beds made up with cotton sheets and duvets and a bathroom, with flush loo and private shower, behind. It also has a dining area built in local style with a palm thatch roof, a fire pit with chairs for pre-dinner relaxation, and a small plunge pool on decking for hot days.

**cont. over**



## ACCOMMODATION cont.

Two or three nights are also spent at a lovely 'tree house' camp, where canvas-roofed sleeping areas are set on a platform built a few metres up in the trees and remaining nights are in a 'fly camp' set up in a traditional leadwood framed enclosure or 'boma', the 'Kgotla'. Here you sleep in comfortable especially designed camping pods. The fly camp has shared open-air showers with hot running water, flush loos and tables and chairs for meals - all set up before you arrive by staff who look after all camp chores, cooking meals, heating water for showers and so on. Accommodation on all safaris is based on two sharing and as safari space is limited a single supplement is charged if you are not prepared to share with another guest (of the same sex) if requested (if you book alone, you will only be asked to share if numbers / mix of guests requires).

## MEALS

Safari food is fresh, generous and you will be very well fed. Days normally start early with a light breakfast of porridge, toast, muffins, fruit and tea or coffee before you ride. There is usually a short break out riding for a snack and when you return from your ride or reach your new camp, you can relax over a substantial lunch, usually buffet style with a varied menu of quiches, salads, bread and cold meats followed by fruit or a cooked pudding. Dinner is usually three courses, perhaps roast beef with all the trimmings or a traditional 'braai' (barbecue) served around the campfire or at a long table under the stars. Menus are carefully chosen and varied and there is always plenty of freshly baked bread, vegetables and salads. Vegetarians can be well catered for with prior notice. Wine, beer, a selection of spirits (on ice) and soft drinks, tea and coffee are all included.



## SAFETY

There will be a short introductory safety talk when you arrive and all riders will be asked to do a short, informal riding assessment to check ability and ensure horses are well matched. Anyone not of the minimum required level will **not** be allowed to ride. Rides are lead by a licensed and qualified guide who carries a rifle as well as a radio, mobile 'phone (although coverage is limited) and first aid kit and is accompanied by a back-up rider or local groom. There is also a comprehensive medical kit at the stables and when riding your guide is in radio contact with the main Mashatu office as well as the stables in case of emergencies.

## WEATHER

Summer months in the Tuli are September to April and it is generally hottest between October and February, with temperatures up to about 38 C at midday. It can rain in October although the rainy season is usually November / December to February. The coolest months are May to August (winter) when midday temperatures reach about 28 C and the area is dry and desert-like. During these months and in early September, it can be quite cold in the early mornings and evenings (dropping to about 4 or 5 C), but even at the coldest times of year, days are normally sunny and warm.

## WHAT TO BRING

We will send you a list when your booking in confirmed.

## ITINERARY

There are 2 different itineraries depending on start day. The following is an example of the 'Tuli 1' itinerary, for safaris starting on a Saturday. Safaris starting on a Monday follow a slightly different 'Tuli 2' route - please contact us for details. Please also note that the daily safari programme always varies a little with movement of game and weather and itineraries are *only* examples. Day-by-day arrangements and routes ridden may be varied in the absolute discretion of your guiding team if weather, movement of game, group ability or other conditions require.

**Tuli 1 Safari example itinerary:**

**Day 1** Arrive Johannesburg ORT International airport (NOTE flights must arrive by 09.00) and make your way to the Information Desk in the International Arrivals Hall where you will be met at **10.00**. After completing registration formalities, depart (at 11.30 latest) by vehicle to the smaller Lanseria airport (about 40 minutes' drive) and shown to the private charter that flies you to the Limpopo Airfield (departing 12.30 latest; about an hour's flight). Met on arrival and after completing Botswana customs and immigration formalities, a drive of approximately 15 minutes to the stables. Time to change and after a light lunch at the stables, meet the horses. Mount up for a short informal riding assessment to check that each rider can independently control and direct their horse. Then set off riding through the bush about 10 kms to Two Mashatus Camp, arriving in time for sundowner drinks. After settling into your tents, meet for supper in the palm covered dining area. Night at Two Mashatus. (L,D)

**Day 2** Start the day at sunrise with tea or coffee brought to your tent before a light breakfast. Mount up and head out of the dense woodland, following the banks of the Limpopo River towards the shallow rocky hills on the edge of the river valley. This is the heart of the Mashatu area, game is plentiful and, with the Tuli block home to one of the largest herds of free roaming elephant south of the Zambezi, there are bound to be excitements in store. Wind your way through the bush to arrive at Tree Camp for lunch, watching game coming to drink at the Majale River from the raised tree platform. After a siesta and tea, a guided walk exploring the area west of the Matabole River, looking out for kudu, warthog and crocodile. Return to Tree camp for hot showers, drinks by the fire and dinner.



**Day 3** An early wake-up call and after a light breakfast mount up again. This is one of the longest rides of the week crossing the centre of Mashatu, passing some of the huge rock formations and giant baobab trees for which the Limpopo Valley is known and following elephant trails across flat, sandy plains - great going for canters. Arrive at the banks of the Motloutse River, where the night will be spent sleeping out in a traditional African enclosure or 'boma' known as the 'Kgotla' after the ancient tribal court that used to be held here. Made of leadwood logs set around an old Mashatu tree, the Kgotla provides perfect security for the night in a cozy camping pod. Lunch and a siesta then in the late afternoon a game drive looking out for lion and leopard ends with sundowners at the impressive rock "Amphitheatre". Return to Kgotla camp for dinner under a star-filled sky, listening to the sounds of the African bush orchestra! Night Kgotla camp (B,L,D)

**Day 4** A relaxed morning ride today exploring some of the area's wonderful sandstone rock formations, including the impressive Solomon's Wall. Archaeological evidence, stone-age tools and rock art, suggest some of the oldest civilisations in Africa settled in this valley. It was also home to the Mapungubwe Dynasty (meaning 'place of the jackal' in Venda) in around 1220 AD. After lunch and a siesta, a late afternoon game drive through the Mmamagwa hills takes you to a wonderful sundowner spot where you can walk to a look-out point under a solitary baobab that gives a fantastic 360 degree view - South Africa to the south, Zimbabwe to the north and Botswana all around. Drive back to Kgotla using a spotlight to look for nocturnal game. Dinner and night Kgotla camp. (B,L,D)



## ITINERARY cont.

**Day 5** An early start and breakfast around the fire, before mounting up to ride northeast following a series of river paths back to the centre of the Reserve. There are lovely views ahead, with baobab trees scattering the landscape and two giant trees growing in the Majali river itself, providing a perfect shady place to rest. After watering the horses, ride on along a mixture of narrow elephant tracks and fairly open mopane-covered plains, then follow the river to reach Tree Camp for lunch (about 4 - 5 hours riding). A well-earned siesta and in the late afternoon a guided bush walk or join a game drive with guides from the main Mashatu Camp to look for lion, leopard and cheetah. This is optional and extra charge (see below), but recommended as cats are often seen. Dinner and night Tree Camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 6** Early breakfast at Tree Camp before heading out on the route back to Two Mashatus, crossing a ridge and a wetland area close the Majali River. There are often baboon here and regular drinking holes along the river draw-in thirsty herds of impala, zebra, wildebeest and eland as well as elephant which come for their daily drink or to wallow in a mud bath. The first part of the route is across some open, sandy plains that are perfect for an exhilarating canter before you head into the cool riverine vegetation around Two Mashatus camp. Arrive back at camp in time for lunch, a welcome dip in the plunge pool and siesta, perhaps with a short guided walk to a nearby 'kopje' for sundowner drinks. Dinner and night Two Mashatus. (B,L,D)

**Day 7** Today's ride explores the plains between the Majale and Pitsane rivers where there is usually plenty of game as well as lovely views into the Limpopo River valley. You may also see the remains of an old Boer war fort on a rocky outcrop and in summer, cooler wetlands with lush grass attract plenty of game. Late lunch at Two Mashatus and in the late afternoon a sundowner ride or last evening walk. Final dinner and night Two Mashatus. (B,L,D)

**Day 8** Breakfast and final ride back through the bush to the stables. Farewell to your horse and time for a shower and lunch before heading off to the Limpopo Airfield for a private charter flight back to Lanseria Johannesburg airport (about an hours' flight), departing approximately 14.30. Arrive Lanseria at about 16.15 and you will be driven about 45 minutes to Johannesburg ORT International Airport. **Onward flights should be after 20.00.** (B, L)



## 2026 DATES & RATES

**Tuli Safaris (7 nights)** - year-round Saturday to Saturday, and also most weeks Monday to Monday.

**High Season: 28 February-4 December**

**Mid Season: 31 January-27 February**

**Low Season: 3-31 January & 5 December- 4 January 2027**

**High Season - £4,295** per person (Single supplement £1503)

**Mid Season - £3,625** per person (Single supplement £1269)

**Low Season - £3,062** per person (Single supplement £766)

**NOTE** - Above rates do **NOT** include transfers to / from Mashatu. Return transfers from Johannesburg International airport by vehicle and private air charter from Lanseria airport add £800 per person - see below for more details.

**Rates INCLUDE** 7 nights twin camp accommodation, all riding and other included safari activities as per itinerary (guided walks, drives on 2 days), guiding and equipment, meals (from lunch Day 1 to lunch Day 8), camp laundry service and drinks (a selection of soft drinks, beer, local spirits and house wine).

**Rates EXCLUDE** International flights to Johannesburg and taxes, transfers to / from Mashatu Game Reserve, personal medical / travel insurance (which you **must** have), optional extra game drive on Day 5 (approximately USD 88 per person), any extra night's accommodation before or after the safari, any visa fees, any tips you may wish to leave staff and a compulsory Conservation levy of 20 USD per person per night (140 USD for the week payable direct).

## DATES & RATES cont.

**Single accommodation** Rates assume twin shared accommodation and if you are booking alone and are not prepared to share a tent with another guest of the same sex if the safari / camp is full, the single supplement will be charged. Supplements are NOT compulsory for single bookings - ONLY charged if not prepared to share and wish to guarantee a single tent / room.



## INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION

The meeting place is either Johannesburg International Airport or, if you make your own way to Botswana, the Pont Drift Border Post between South Africa and Botswana.

Charter flights / transfers from Lanseria airport to Limpopo are arranged at **set times** and booked on a 'whole plane' basis. The current rate is £800 per person return as above (assuming a minimum of 5 travelling on the plane). Charter rates are subject to change and should be confirmed when you book. If charter flights are not available, overland transfers will be organised (about a 5 ½ hour drive from Johannesburg ORT to Pont Drift - 315 miles). The current rate for vehicle transfers is £510 each way per car taking 3 passengers (subject to change and to be confirmed when you book).

To make use of group air charters you need an International flight that arrives Johannesburg ORT airport **before 09.00 on the first day of the safari**. You must be ready to meet at the Information Desk in the Arrivals Hall by 10.00 and ensure you have **plenty of time to clear immigration and collect your luggage before this**. On the return your flight out of Johannesburg should **not** depart before **20.00**.

Vehicle transfers can be organised from Johannesburg Airport to Mashatu but the Pont Drift border closes at 16.00 so ALL vehicle transfers on the first day must leave Johannesburg **before 10.00**.

If you prefer to hire a car and drive yourself to Pont Drift this is another option. You will be met at the border at about 13.00, your car can be left there safely and you will be driven onto Two Mashatus Camp (about 30 minutes). After the safari you will be driven back to Pont Drift.

## INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION cont.

For flights to Johannesburg from London we recommend a direct overnight flight. British Airways usually have 2 direct flights each evening, the earlier of which departs at about 18.25 and arrives JNB around 07.30. Unless you are planning extra time in Johannesburg this is currently the only direct option. **Please note flight arrival information above and call us if you would like more details. Our ATOL number for flight bookings is 6213**

## GENERAL VISA & 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 South Africa or Botswana for a holiday only and staying less than 90 days you do not need to arrange a visa in advance. For Botswana your passport must be valid for at least 6 months after the date you arrive and have at least 3 blank pages (2 additional blank pages required for South Africa). If you plan to travel with children note there are special requirements requiring provision of birth certificates and other documents. These are strictly enforced, particularly if only one parent is accompanying, so you must check carefully.

**Health** No inoculations are legally required for entry to Botswana from Europe but the NaTHNaC Travel Health Pro website advises most travellers to be up to date with routine vaccinations and have vaccination against Tetanus, Hepatitis A and Typhoid. For some travellers vaccination against Cholera, Hepatitis B, Rabies and TB may also be recommended and you may need a Yellow Fever vaccination certificate in some circumstances. Anti-Malaria tablets are not generally required for the Tuli area. We will send you more information if you confirm your booking but you should always consult a qualified health professional for further and more detailed advice.

(DRAFT 08/12/2025)

