RIDE WORLD WIDE
BOTSWANA, OKAVANGO DELTA
OKAVANGO HORSE SAFARIS (KUJWANA CAMP) 2027

RIDE INFORMATION

We offer three different horse safari options in Botswana's Okavango Delta. This information relates to Okavango Horse Safaris (OHS) which was established in 1986 by horse safari pioneers PJ and Barney Bestelink and is now owned and operated by Gareth and Alex Peake. Safaris with OHS are based out of Kujwana Camp but also use up to two other camp locations in a vast private concession area. With an emphasis on exploring the Delta by horse, the option of game drives, guided walks and (subject to water levels) boat trips all included, they offer a truly memorable, all-round Delta experience.



OVERVIEW OF THE DELTA

The Okavango Delta region covers close to 15,000 square kilometres. Roughly one third, the central and eastern side stretching to Chobe National Park, has been designated a protected area, the Moremi Game Reserve. The rest is sub-divided into huge unfenced private wildlife concessions, all of which are carefully monitored and managed with strict guest quotas to help protect and preserve the natural environment for wildlife. The terrain across the region varies from the permanent water of the Okavango River (which joins the Delta to its northwest), papyrus swamps, reed beds and flat, open floodplain to thickly wooded date palm islands, riverine woodland and forests of mopane trees. Depending on the time of year, on rain that has fallen locally and in the River's main catchment area, the Angolan Highlands, 500 kms to the north, the floodplains (which look rather like the grassy fairway on a golf course when not flooded) may be covered with a layer of surface water ranging from a few inches to several feet deep in places. When rain in Angola falls into the Okavango River as it journeys south, the river gradually swells; then, as it meets the dry Kalahari basin, it divides like fingers on a hand into narrower waterways, spreading, saturating and flooding once-dry grassland to form marshy swamp and water meadow. Historically flood levels tend to be cyclical - a number of years of high water followed by a number of years of low - with new water arriving in the main Delta region sometime between April and July each year and subsiding from August to October.

DATES

Safaris are possible year-round. Between late March and late November the minimum stay is usually 5 nights with 5, 7 and 10 night safaris starting on a Saturday. In the December, January, February and March 'green season', there is a little more flexibility and start day can often be organised to suit. To check availability and discuss plans please contact us at Ride World Wide.

HORSES

There are over 50 horses at Kujwana, most between 14hh and 17hh. They include TB and TB crosses, American Saddle bred crosses, South African Boerperds, Friesian crosses, Arabs and Anglo Arabs. Many were homebred as safari horses by OHS founder Barney Bestelink and they are all used to game, being turned out freely around the camp to graze by day. There is a good selection for different riders and all are well-schooled, responsive and energetic to ride, making hours in the saddle a real pleasure. Grooms are on hand at camps and look after the horses during all safaris.

TACK

Tack is good quality. Most horses go in snaffle bridles and saddles are usually a South African 'Maclellan' style, which are comfortable for horse and rider for long hours. Saddles have 'seat savers' for extra comfort and water bottles, in a 'pommel pouch', are also provided.





RIDING

Safaris usually involve around 4 (and sometimes up to 6) hours riding a day, although this is flexible and riding is well broken up with refreshment stops to give horses a break and allow riders to stretch muscles. All safaris are based out of Kujwana Camp but the daily programme always varies. On most safaris the first few nights are at Kujwana and from there riders usually head out for a ride of around 4 hours to explore, setting off early when the game is best, and tracking and watching game en-route, before riding back to camp for lunch and a long rest. In the late afternoon, when it is cool, there is often a different game activity, perhaps a game drive, guided walk or peaceful mokoro trip (if water levels allow) before sunset or you can ride out again late afternoon if you wish. Safaris of at least 5 nights in the main seasons normally also include the option of spending 2 nights at OHS's 'fly' camp in a different area, with a long picnic ride from Kujwana to the fly camp one day, a day to explore the area around fly camp, then a long ride by a different route back to Kujwana base camp (although this may be subject to weather – fly camp generally not used in the rainy season November to February). Guests staying 10 nights also have the option to spend a night at a second fly camp 'Platforms'. Riding groups are usually limited to 6 guests (with guides) although by arrangement a private group of 7 or 8 guests may be able to ride together.

WEIGHT LIMIT

The rider weight limit is 90kgs (14 stone 2lbs) in riding clothes. Please contact us if you are close to 90kgs. Occasionally by prior arrangement heavier experienced and fit riders *may* be taken but this **must** be organised in advance (a supplement may also be charged for an extra horse if you exceed the weight limit).

PACE

Riding on safari is at a medium and well varied pace overall, with plenty of long trots and exhilarating canters where the ground allows. When the flood is highest, you may find your horse has to wade shoulder high, or perhaps swim, to get from island to island, but even at high water the going around the edge of the islands is normally good to firm so there are usually plenty of chances for long trots and canters. Riders are able to spread out and take their own line where terrain allows but as riding is in a 'big' game area, you are always expected to stay behind your guide and take careful note of instructions. You might also be asked to get off and walk your horse from time to time to rest horses' backs and stretch muscles.





RIDING EXPERIENCE

To ride with OHS you must be a reasonably competent, confident rider as you will be riding in an open wilderness area where there is 'big' (and potentially dangerous) game including elephant and lion. Although you don't need to be an expert over jumps or in competition, you should be comfortable, confident and in control on a horse at all paces (walk to fast canter) and used to riding in open country, over varied terrain with a group of horses. There is a good selection of responsive, well-schooled horses for different riders - ranging from clever, reliable Boerperds to long striding eager-to-please Warmbloods and TBs - but all riders must be balanced, relaxed and secure in the saddle - able to stay on if their horse reacts suddenly or needs to move quickly out of trouble! Children are accepted (usually only over 12years unless special arrangement is made) but must be strong, competent riders and to ensure this, a Pony Club or instructor's certificate may be required. All riders should also be riding fit and if you are not used to long riding days, we strongly recommend plenty of practice to accustom yourself to the hours in the saddle before you go.

TERRAIN

Kujwana is in the southwest Delta, in a huge private concession with a good variety of terrain, ranging from big expanses of open floodplain to thickly wooded palm islands, dense forests of mopane and bigger shady trees. The camp itself is on a narrow island on the Delta's Xudum River system, to the southwest of Chief's Island. The flood in this area is usually reliable, although water levels vary every single year. Up until 2019 when the Delta suffered significant drought, very high-water levels had seen horses wading and sometimes swimming out of camp during peak water months (usually May, June and July) or to move from island to island. 2019 was, in complete contrast, a year in which the whole of the Delta experienced exceptional draught conditions and there was very little flood water everywhere even in June and July. 2026 has seen plenty of flood water. When the flood recedes (usually late August into September) the area has plenty of open grassland making it ideal for horses.



GAME

The Delta has huge numbers of game year-round and is a wild, unfenced and unspoiled game-rich environment. A large population of elephant roam the area, along with big herds (often many hundreds) of buffalo. Some game species such as the characteristic water-adapted antelope, red lechwe, and shy swamp-loving sitatunga are permanent residents of the wetland areas and other water lovers such as hippo and crocodile move around locally as water levels rise and fall. Unlike in East Africa, there is no single mass-herd migration. Giraffe, zebra, impala and wildebeest move in mid-sized herds, social or family groups to and from the Delta's drier Kalahari borders as water levels change, whilst species such as warthog, tsessebe and kudu travel widely through the whole area, as do predators such as lion, hyena, leopard and wild dog. During any safari with OHS you can usually expect to see a wide variety of game - zebra, wildebeest, impala, perhaps kudu, reedbuck, lechwe (depending on water levels) and tsessebe, also giraffe, hippo, hyena, crocodiles, monkeys, baboons and warthogs. Elephant and buffalo are often seen, frequently in large breeding herds, and if lucky you may see sitatunga, lion and perhaps leopard, cheetah or the endangered wild dog. The Delta is famous for birds with over 400 recorded species making it a fabulous choice for keen birders—fish eagles, cranes, storks, vultures, kingfishers, ostrich, jacanas, bee eaters and many more. Generally it is considered one of the world's finest game viewing areas in any season both because of the density and variety of game but also because it offers such an unspoilt wildlife environment - although it is always important to remember that animals roam freely across a vast, unfenced area and there may be more of one species than another in a particular place at a particular time. Environmental factors such as long grass or high water also can (and do) affect game viewing- if predators take cover in long grass or **cont. over**

GAME cont.

animals hide amongst date palms on the islands, they can be hard to spot or follow safely. However with access to a vast private area, different habitats and camp locations, as well as the option of horses, vehicles and boats, OHS guests usually have fantastic game viewing uninterrupted by other visitors or vehicles.

NON-RIDERS

Non-riders are well catered for at Kujwana with game drive vehicles, guided walks and (subject to water levels) mokoro and motorboat trips all available. Rodgers, Kujwana's hugely experienced walking and mokoro guide, is a wonderful companion for any non-riders and arrangements can always be made for riders and non-riders to meet up after game viewing activities, for bush lunches and evenings at camp, making it a super option for a mixed group of riders and non-riders.

GUIDES & STAFF

Gareth was brought up in Maun and has been exploring the Delta since he was a child. Having worked on and off as a guide for OHS and other horse safari operators in Botswana for the last 15 years, as well as guiding riding safaris in Kenya and running his own mobile safaris all over Botswana, he was the ideal successor to PJ & Barney. Alex, who is English and moved to Botswana from the UK, first joined OHS in 2013 to help with camp management. Together they are a wonderful, enthusiastic partnership who have brought a fresh approach, new energy and ideas to OHS whilst continuing the safari ethos that has worked so well for many years. Rides and other game viewing outings are either lead by Gareth or licensed local guides who are all fantastic game spotters and trackers. Several have been with OHS since the beginning: Rodgers joined as a groom in 1993, qualified as a guide in 2006 and was lead riding guide for many years. He now leads mokoro and walking safaris, whilst Boy and Mumshi, both also OHS trained, are lead riding guides. Elen Barnes who was brought in Uganda is horse manager and a fantastic part of the team.





ACCOMMODATION

Kujwana is an authentic, very comfortable yet unpretentious camp sleeping up to 12 guests in 6 double / twin bedded tented 'suites' (2 larger riverside suites and 4 standard suites), each set on a wooden platform, with its own bathroom with shower and flush loo. Suites are linked by a teak walkway to the camp's main social areas - a sitting, dining and bar area set with comfortable sofas and chairs under a canopy of trees, a campfire area, a decking veranda that overlooks the water and is the perfect lunch spot, adjacent to a tented dining room that is a wonderful setting for dinners. There is also a small plunge pool with sun beds - perfect for a dip after riding. The 'fly' camp is fully mobile, but its specially designed tents are wonderfully spacious, have comfortable beds (all bed linen provided), en-suite shower room and flush loo and the central mess area has a long table for meals and comfortable chairs and sofas for R&R. 10 night safaris include the option of a night sleeping out on beds (using bedrolls under mosquito nets) set up on platforms raised on stilts, in the area around the Quaapo River - a thrilling way to experience the bush under a canopy of southern hemisphere stars. Beds at all camps (and bedrolls at Platforms) are made up with cotton sheets, pillows and duvets and towels are provided. Safari rates assume twin / double share accommodation. Where possible single travellers will be given a single tent but this is **only** for 2 singles maximum on any safari (on a 'first come, first served' basis) and otherwise to guarantee single occupancy, a 30% supplement is charged.



MEALS

You will be extremely well fed on safari with three meals a day and snacks in between. Food is locally sourced, bread is baked every day and there is an emphasis on fresh vegetables and salads (but please let us know in advance if you are a vegetarian or have special dietary requirements). Lunches are al fresco, out in the bush or in camp after riding, dinner is three courses, accompanied by house wine and served by candlelight at a long table under the stars or in the dining tent. Beer, wine, a selection of cold drinks and a choice of spirits, tea and coffee are all included.

SAFETY

Rides are lead by a qualified and licensed guide, accompanied by a second back-up rider who is on hand to support and spot game. A .375 rifle is carried on all rides and both lead and backup guides also carry a 'bear-banger' (a small explosive device to scare off any troublesome game). When you arrive, there will be an introductory talk on the routine and safety when riding and a hand-held radio and first aid kit are taken out riding (with a more comprehensive medical kit in camp). The camp is in radio contact with Maun and has a satellite 'phone for emergencies. Membership of the Okavango Air Rescue emergency helicopter evacuation is included as standard for all guests (riders and non-riders) but you must have your own personal medical and travel insurance.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM & ENVIRONMENT

Upholding the principles of sustainability and responsible eco-tourism, OHS promotes low-impact tourism. The camp is solar powered, manure is recycled into Biogas which fuels gas stoves for cooking and a Bio Rock solar powered sewage system cleans wastewater. With safaris primarily by horse or on foot, the camp's overall environmental impact is low.







WEATHER

Summer months in the Delta are September to April, with hottest months generally October, November and February, when midday temperatures can reach 38 or 40 degrees C. The rainy season is usually December to February although it can also rain in October and November with occasional thunderstorms in September. The coolest winter months, when it is also dry (no rain) are May to August when midday temperatures reach about 28 degrees C. During these months, and in early September, it can be quite cold in the early mornings and evenings (dropping to about 4 or 5 degrees C), but even at the coldest times of year, days are normally sunny and warm. Confusing to many, the **dry** winter months are when the Delta has its seasonal flood - when rain that has fallen a few months earlier in the Angolan Highlands, flows down the Okavango River causing the river to flood out over the Delta region.

WHAT TO BRING

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

ITINERARY

Safaris are very individualized and the structure of each day depends on the movement of game, weather, water levels and guest preferences. Proposals for the next day are often discussed at dinner the night before. Safaris are based out of Kujwana Camp with the option, if staying at least 5 nights in main seasons, of two nights at fly camp exploring a new area. Below is an example 7 night itinerary - but **note** it is only an example and daily arrangements and riding routes are always subject to change in your guides' absolute discretion according to water levels, weather, game and other local conditions.

Day 1 Met on arrival at Maun airport and shown to the helicopter that will take you on a spectacular 25 minute flight over the Delta, a wonderful opportunity to see the entire Delta and game from the air, landing close to Kujwana Camp. Meet the safari team at camp and an introductory talk over tea. Then perhaps a rest before meeting the horses and a short late afternoon ride to try them and for your first view of the area. Dinner and night Kujwana camp. (D)

ITINERARY cont.

Day 2 Woken early at about 06.00 for breakfast and to be ready for an early morning game ride at about 07.00, when game viewing is best. Mount up and once everyone is settled, head off riding out across the lush green floodplain that leads from island to island, perhaps surprising a timid bushbuck out of dense cover on a heavily wooded island, or watching zebra and other antelope move through the open spaces. Stop for a snack out riding before making your way back to camp after about 4 hours riding. A shower or a dip in the plunge pool, a leisurely lunch in camp and then time to relax or siesta until tea at about 4pm. After tea, you might head out on a late afternoon game drive stopping for a drink and to watch the sunset before returning to camp using a spotlight to spot game such as hyena, civet and leopard. Candlelit dinner and night Kujwana camp. (B,L,D)

Day 3 Early wake-up call and, after packing what you need for 2 nights away from base, perhaps head off on an exciting long ride which takes you to a 'fly' camp set up in a new area. The route will move through a variety of terrain, heading south across open floodplain and scattered islands perhaps with detours to follow and watch game along the way. The programme always depends on the weather, game and water level but you may stop for a picnic breakfast or lunch en-route, resting for a few hours on a shady island, perhaps next to a swimming hole, before riding the final part in the late afternoon. Arrive at fly camp in time for hot showers and to settle in before sunset. Dinner and night in the new camp. (B,L,D)

Day 4 A full day to explore this new area, perhaps with an early morning game drive when it is cool to look for big cats which you can get closer to in a vehicle than you may wish to on a horse. Return to camp for lunch and a siesta before heading out on the horses to explore, returning to camp at sunset. Dinner and second night fly camp. (B, L,D)



Day 5 Early wake up for a long ride, by a different route, back to Kujwana. There are always detours to track and watch game and will be a stop for a break and snack along the way, before arriving back at Kujwana to welcome hot showers or a dip in the plunge pool and leisurely lunch. Time to siesta and relax in camp before (if water levels allow) an outing by boat or head off on a game drive, stopping to watch the sun set and returning with a spotlight to search for nocturnal game on the hunt. Drinks, dinner and night Kujwana Camp. (B,L,D)

Days 6 & 7 Two final days to explore. An early morning game ride might take you to the western Baobab area where small islands linked by numerous hippo channels eventually lead to 'Baobab Island', a good habitat for cheetah and breeding ground for the gorgeous carmine bee-eater, a summer visitor to the Delta. Baobab Island has thick riverine forest and is a good area for elephant (as well as the unexpected!). After lunch, time to siesta and tea, in the late afternoon, perhaps a peaceful mokoro outing (depending on water levels) always a wonderful way to experience the Delta and bird walk or head off in game drive vehicles once more to track leopard and lion on the hunt. Dinner in camp or perhaps in a surprise location…! Two nights Kujwana Camp (B,L,D)

Day 8 Depending on departure times there may be time for a last early morning game ride out of Kujwana, returning to camp for breakfast. Pack up and you will then be taken to board a helicopter for the short flight back into Maun for your onward journey. (B)

DATES & RATES 2027

DATES - March to November (inclusive) - 5, 7 and 10 night safaris, starting Saturdays
NB If start dates do not suit exactly, please contact us to discuss as there may be some flexibility.

January, February & December - Safari dates are flexible (safaris usually based throughout at Kujwana).

RATES - Safari rates are **per person per night** and depend on the season.
Rates below **INCLUDE** all riding and other game viewing activities on offer (bird walks, game drives, boat and mokoro outings) with guiding (shared basis) and equipment, twin / double shared camp accommodation, meals (dinner first day to brunch last day), all house drinks, Land board concession fees and local government taxes. They **EXCLUDE** International flights to Maun and taxes, transfers between Maun and the camp (see below), personal medical / travel insurance (which you **must** have), any visa fees and any tips you may wish to leave the staff.

High Season: 29th May to 2nd October - £1,190 per night
5 night safari: £5,950; **7 night safari:** £8,330; **10 night safari:** £11,900

Mid Season: 28th March to 29th May & 2nd October to 27th November - £970 per night
5 night safari: £4,850; **7 night safari:** £6,790; **10 night safari:** £9,700

Standard Season: 28th November to 27th March - £810 per night

Riverside Suites The two spacious Riverside Suites have prime views, are built on the river and can be reserved (if available) on request for a supplement of **£110 per suite, per night**.

Single supplements The first 2 single travellers booking on any date can reserve single accommodation without a supplement. After this, guests may be requested to share **OR** pay a 30% supplement to guarantee single accommodation. Please contact us to check.



Transfers from Maun to the camp The safari meeting point is Maun in Botswana and transfers between Maun and the camp are either by helicopter charter (about 20-25 minutes and recommended as it takes you straight to the camp) or by fixed wing air charter followed by a game drive. Rates above **EXCLUDE** air charter / transfer costs.

2027 transfer rates: For 2027 helicopter rates Maun to Kujwana are £355 per person per way (£710 per person return). A fixed wing air charter is £280 per person per way (£560 per person return). Air charter suitability depends on water levels and NOTE that if you chose a fixed wing charter, riding or another activity is NOT usually possible on the day of your flight (incoming or outgoing). The nearest airstrip is a 1-2 hour (sometimes longer if water is high) game drive from the camp.

Note that transfer rates assume at least 2 people travelling together and there is a 50% supplement for a helicopter transfer if just one person. Please contact us to discuss options.
NOTE that ALL transfer rates are subject to variation with increases in fuel costs.

Fixed wing air charters to Kasane on the Botswana / Zimbabwe border (which is ideal for travel on to Chobe or Victoria Falls) are also possible. Please contact us for details.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS AND TRAVEL INFORMATION

Maun is the safari meeting place. The best way to travel from London is generally either via Johannesburg in South Africa - there are no direct flights London to Maun – or (depending on dates) via Addis Adaba with Ethiopian Airlines. You can also fly to Maun via Windhoek in Namibia, Harare in Zimbabwe and Gaborone in Botswana, but Johannesburg and Addis are usually the easiest connection points.

Travelling from London: If you fly via Johannesburg, you should plan an overnight flight to Johannesburg (British Airways and Virgin fly direct London to Johannesburg every day, leaving London at about 19.00 / 21.00 and arriving JHB at about 07.00 / 09.00). Once in Johannesburg, you need to change planes and take an SA Airlink or Air Botswana flight to Maun. These are daily with one (occasionally two) morning departures Johannesburg to Maun taking around 1 hr 40 mins. Due to connection times, to avoid an overnight stay in Johannesburg, British Airways are usually the best international carrier to use with **the earlier BA flight recommended** on the outward journey. On the return, daily flights from Maun to Johannesburg will connect with overnight return flights to London. Ethiopian Airlines have flights from London to Maun via Addis several times a week and if dates suit these are usually a very good value option.
Please call us for more flight information, a quote for a flight inclusive holiday or if you would like us to book your flights. Our ATOL number for flight bookings is 6213.

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 Botswana for a holiday only and staying less than 90 days you do not need to arrange a visa in advance.
If you are travelling with a child under 18 years, please note there are special requirements requiring provision of birth certificates and other documents, which are strictly enforced, particularly if only one parent is accompanying.

Health No inoculations are legally required for Botswana but usual recommendation is to be up to date with vaccinations against Polio, Tetanus, Typhoid and Hepatitis A. You will usually also be advised to take anti-Malaria tablets - you should consult a health professional for further and more detailed advice. If you are flying via Ethiopia, a Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate is a technical requirement for entry to Botswana, although local airline guidance (as of April 2025) is that this is not required if you are just in transit through Addis airport from Europe and do not leave the airport.

(DRAFT 05/10/2026)

