

TIME IS RUNNING OUT - Bookings for 2027 are closing at the end of October 2026. Don't miss out – book before the deadline to secure your place and lock in your unforgettable journey.

Blyde River Canyon, South Africa

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NEWSLETTER

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PERSONALISED, UNIQUE SAFARI ADVENTURES ACROSS SOUTHERN AFRICA

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NEW – RAW now offers Westerns Cape food and wine safaris

The Western Cape is South Africa's culinary heartland, where world-class wine and inventive food culture meet dramatic mountain and coastal scenery. At its centre lies the Cape Winelands — Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and Paarl — three historic towns surrounded by vineyards planted on soils as varied as decomposed granite and ancient shale. This diversity produces an equally varied range of wines, from crisp Chenin Blanc and mineral-driven Sauvignon Blanc to bold Pinotage, South Africa's signature red grape, and increasingly refined Cabernet and Syrah blends.

Franschhoek, founded by French Huguenot settlers in the 17th century, has evolved into the region's fine-dining capital, its main street lined with acclaimed restaurants and tasting rooms often sharing the same historic estate. Many wine farms now pair tastings with multi-course menus designed around each vintage, while others offer more relaxed picnic lunches set among the vines. Stellenbosch, the oldest of the wine towns, blends academic energy from its university with centuries-old cellars, some still using traditional methods passed down through generations of winemaking families.

Beyond the Winelands, Cape Town itself has become a serious food destination, with a market culture, from the Old Biscuit Mill to Babylonstoren, showcasing the region's obsession with fresh produce, seafood and artisanal producers. The Cape Floral Region's unique biodiversity even shapes the food, with fynbos botanicals increasingly used in cooking and gin production. Together, the wine estates, chef-driven restaurants and coastal seafood traditions make the Western Cape one of the world's most compelling food and wine regions.



Commencing in 2027, RAW offers prospective travellers an opportunity to experience the unique culinary delights paired with the exceptional wines in the stunning western cape of South Africa. Register your interest by simply sending us an email at contact@realafricanwilderness.com

Safari News Headlines

- **Pack of 20 endangered African wild dogs poisoned near Okavango Delta.** An entire breeding pack of 20 African wild dogs – including ten puppies – has been wiped out in what authorities are calling an act of deliberate malice. The incident has sent shock waves through the conservation community and serves as a stark reminder of the fragile existence of one of Africa's most endangered predators.
- **Namibia's 2026 Tourism Rise Signals a New African Travel Powerhouse.** Namibia is emerging as Africa's most unique destination in 2026 because its rare mix of desert landscapes, wildlife adventures, ocean experiences and luxury escapes offers travellers a journey unlike any other. The country's growing appeal comes from its ability to combine untouched nature, exclusive experiences and unforgettable exploration in one destination. The ascendance of Namibia in 2026 signifies a new era in travel across Africa, one where tourists are looking for more memorable adventures as opposed to simple vacations. With its exceptional blend of desert, game viewing, coastal allure and high-end wildlife safari retreats, Namibia is positioning itself as an exciting yet exclusive destination.
- **Foreign tourists are returning to South Africa.** South Africa is enjoying a strong tourism comeback, with international visitor numbers continuing to rise in 2026. The latest figures from the Department of Tourism show that 6.58 million international tourists visited South Africa between January and July 2026 – 12.4% more than during the same period in 2025. Cape Town & the winelands, the Kruger and the Garden Route continues to be South Africa's biggest international tourism destinations. South Africa's variety is another major advantage. Visitors can combine beaches, mountains, wildlife, wine regions, cities and cultural attractions in a single trip.



Kruger National Park Named World's Top Safari Destination

Kruger National Park has been named the top safari destination for the September–December period in Holafly's new Autumn/Winter (northern hemisphere) Safari Destination Index, which ranked locations on wildlife density, seasonal conditions, accessibility and conservation standards. The South African park edged out Tanzania's Serengeti, Zambia's South Luangwa, Zimbabwe's Hwange and Kenya's Maasai Mara to claim the number one spot overall. Although not as raw as Chobe for example, the Kruger has it all with good roads, many camps/lodges and an exceptional wildlife variety.

Kruger's win comes down to a strong mix of wildlife, ease of access and accommodation variety. Regional airports and an extensive SANParks-managed road network mean visitors can explore multiple areas without relying on expensive bush flights, while its blend of public and private lodging suits a wide range of budgets. The index also points to Southern Africa's broader value-for-money appeal, offering high-quality wildlife viewing at a lower cost than many of East Africa's more famous safari circuits.

Kruger topped the rankings across all traveller regions surveyed. Australians ranked it first ahead of Hwange, South Luangwa, the Serengeti and the Maasai Mara, with strong Johannesburg flight connections cited as a key advantage. European travellers placed Kruger first too, followed by South Luangwa, Hwange, the Serengeti and the Maasai Mara, while North Americans ranked it first ahead of the Maasai Mara, the Serengeti, Hwange and South Luangwa.

Spanning nearly two million hectares, it is the largest national reserve in South Africa and renowned across the entire world. This expanse of subtropical woodland provides a vast range of scenery, diverse flora, and spectacular wild animals of all sizes and characters. As such, Kruger National Park is known for having the highest population-density of the Big Five animals in South Africa, serving up ample opportunity to see lions, elephants, rhinos, leopards, and African buffalo. The iconic park also promises to deliver a multitude of African safari animal sightings such as giraffes, zebra, wildebeest, and hyenas.

RAW offers prospective travellers the chance to experience the Kruger in our 21-Day South Africa Glamping Safari. Visit realafricanwilderness.com for more information.

"Beyond the Scavenger Myth: The Hidden Intelligence of the Spotted Hyena"

The spotted hyena is one of Africa's most misunderstood predators, saddled with a reputation as a cowardly scavenger that its biology simply doesn't support. In reality, hyenas make roughly 60-95% of their own kills, often bringing down prey as large as wildebeest and zebra through coordinated pack hunting. Their bite force is among the strongest of any mammal, generated by a skull and jaw structure dense enough to crush bone allowing them to consume nearly every part of a carcass, including teeth and horns, and extract nutrition other predators leave behind.

Their social structure is equally remarkable. Spotted hyenas live in matriarchal clans of up to 80 individuals, among the largest and most complex social groups of any carnivore. Females are larger and more aggressive than males and dominate the clan hierarchy, with rank inherited directly from the mother, a female cub outranks every adult male in the group from birth. This social intelligence extends to problem-solving; studies have shown hyenas can cooperate on tasks and remember social relationships across the clan, cognitive feats once thought unique to primates.

Their famous "laugh" is not mirth at all, but a signal of submission or excitement, used to communicate rank and defuse tension within the group. Combined with their whooping calls, which can carry for miles and help coordinate hunts or rally clan members, spotted hyenas have one of the most sophisticated vocal repertoires in the animal kingdom — a far cry from their reputation as mere scavengers. Spotted Hyena can be seen on all RAW wildlife safaris.

