

SAFARI

SO GOOD!

Encounters of the best kind were experienced while on this splendid safari. From start to finish, it was gold standard all the way.

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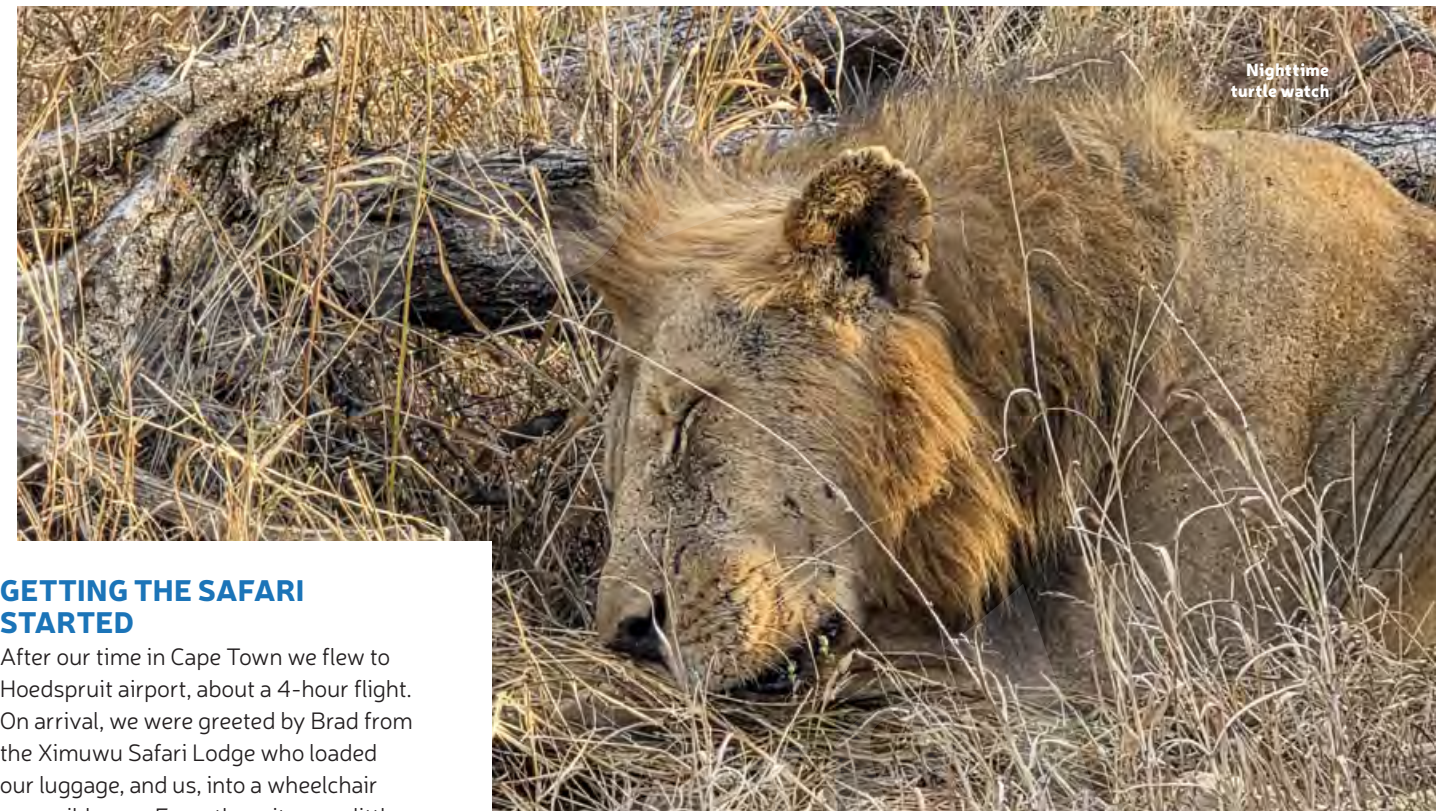
As a wheelchair user since 1980 (T5 complete spinal cord injury) I have been fortunate to travel to many parts of the world. I always dreamed of doing a safari tour in Africa, and in June 2025, that dream came true. My wife and I headed to South Africa for a couple of weeks, visiting Cape Town before spending seven nights at the Ximuwu Safari Lodge located in the Klaserie Private Nature Reserve.

GETTING THERE

We flew from Sydney to Johannesburg with a connecting flight to Cape Town where we stayed at the Marriott Crystal Towers Hotel. While this accommodation option served our purpose, if we were to do the trip again, we would choose to stay instead at one of the accessible hotels in the V&A Waterfront district. It's a fun area, with lots of live entertainment,

restaurants, and markets.

We really enjoyed Cape Town's scenery, friendly locals, accessibility, and great food (especially the steak, oysters, and jumbo-sized prawns). Using a rental car, we visited the V&A Waterfront, Table Mountain, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, Boulders Beach, Cape Point, the Beau Constantina winery, and Chapman's Peak Drive at sunset.



Nighttime
turtle watch

GETTING THE SAFARI STARTED

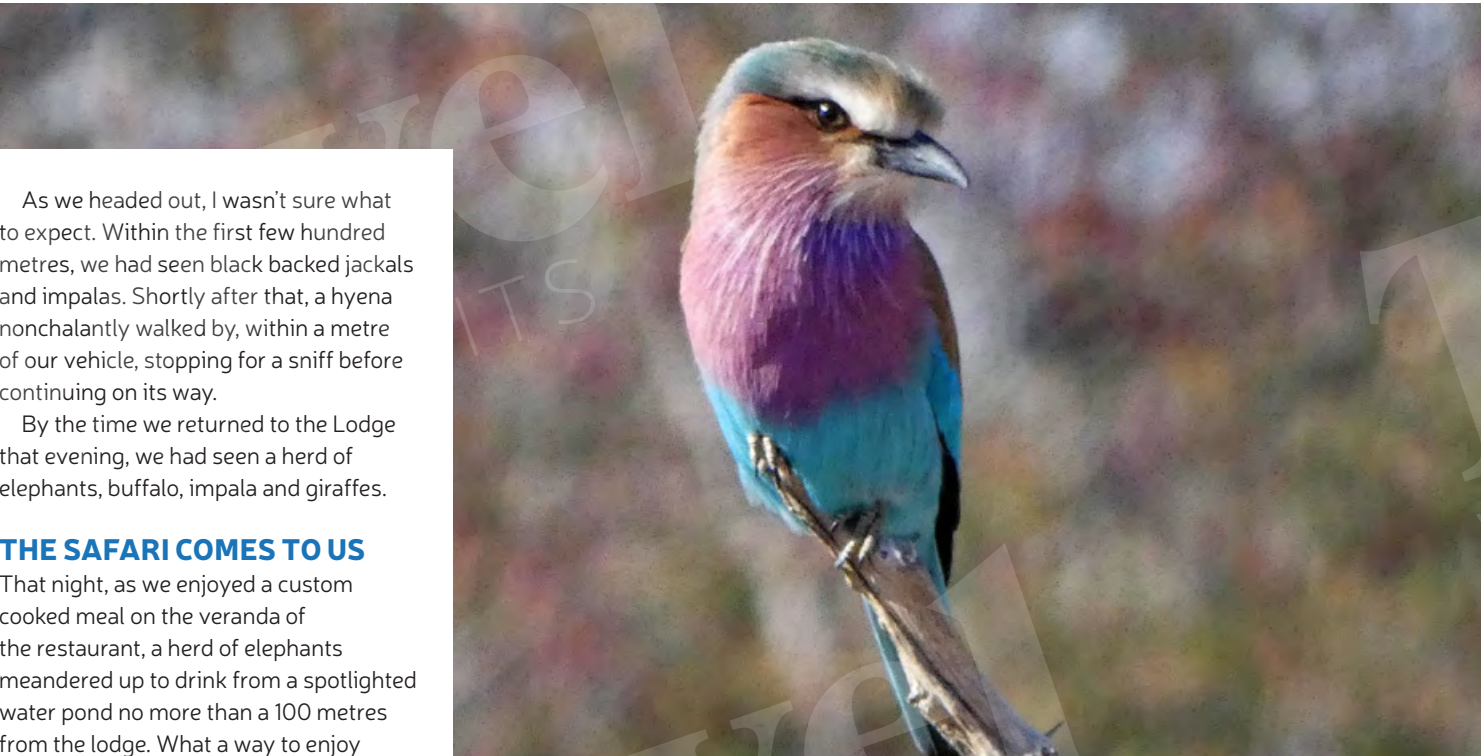
After our time in Cape Town we flew to Hoedspruit airport, about a 4-hour flight. On arrival, we were greeted by Brad from the Ximuwu Safari Lodge who loaded our luggage, and us, into a wheelchair accessible van. From there it was a little over an hour's drive to the Lodge.

Ximuwu is billed as a luxury Safari Lodge, and it proved to be that and more. It delivers outstanding, uncompromised accessibility. We stayed in a large and beautifully decorated two room cabin, with an adjustable bed, large roll in shower with shower chair, and a bath with a bath lift. The Lodge can also provide a mobile commode chair, shower chair, hoists and other assistive technology on request. The Lodge hosts a maximum of eight guests, and on our first three nights we had it to ourselves.

We didn't need to wait long for the Safari to begin. From the veranda of our cabin, we saw all sorts of wildlife. After we had settled in, we went on our first Safari drive.

To get into the Safari vehicle, there's an elevated platform that is level with the floor of the vehicle and accessed via a ramp. For a super easy transfer into the vehicle, there's a seat behind the driver which slides out. I could transfer easily, without negotiating doors or other obstacles. I really appreciated the independence and convenience of this system, and it allowed me to fully participate in the Safari drives with my wife. ▶





As we headed out, I wasn't sure what to expect. Within the first few hundred metres, we had seen black backed jackals and impalas. Shortly after that, a hyena nonchalantly walked by, within a metre of our vehicle, stopping for a sniff before continuing on its way.

By the time we returned to the Lodge that evening, we had seen a herd of elephants, buffalo, impala and giraffes.

THE SAFARI COMES TO US

That night, as we enjoyed a custom cooked meal on the veranda of the restaurant, a herd of elephants meandered up to drink from a spotlighted water pond no more than a 100 metres from the lodge. What a way to enjoy fine dining! For a close-up experience, we could get into the accessible "hide" bunker, right next to the pond, as giraffes, elephants, and zebras meandered over to drink from the water.

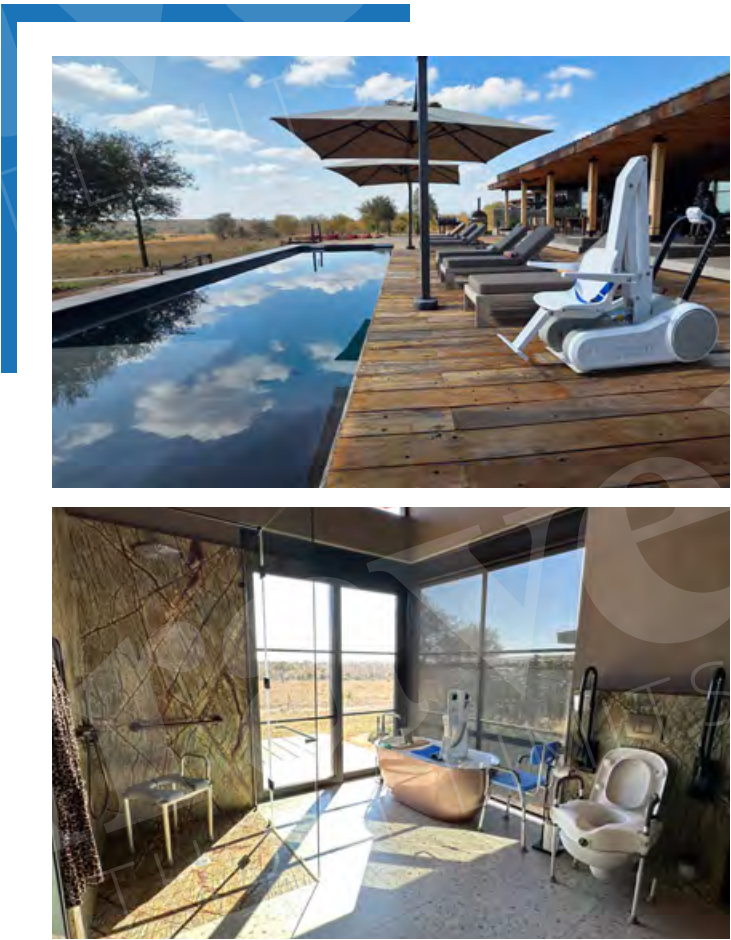
After that first evening, every morning and every afternoon we went out on Safari drives, enjoying beautiful sunrises and sunsets while also having close-up encounters with a pride of lions, wild dogs (painted wolves), elephants, buffalo, rhinos, giraffes, zebras, hippos, hyenas, jackals and various antelopes. We did get to see a leopard, another tick on our "big five" list.

LOVING THE LODGE

As well as the restaurant and bar (my wife enjoyed the cocktails!), Ximuwu Safari Lodge has a swimming pool that overlooks the water pond and can be accessed with a mobile pool lift.

When guests book three nights or more, a 30-minute helicopter ride over the grounds is included. I love helicopters, and the aerial views of animals were amazing. As an example of how committed the Lodge is to accessibility, they had a custom made elevated platform with a ramp built for the helicopter to make the transfer in and

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out of it as easy as possible. The booking also included a one-hour massage. After the early mornings and late nights, the massage was more than welcome. I went with a hot stone version and am glad I did. The staff of Ximuwu are friendly and accommodating. They went to great lengths to ensure we had everything and anything we needed. The restaurant made every meal a fine dining experience, with an extensive wine and drink offering. This was not a cheap holiday, but it was worth every penny we paid. We really could not have asked for more. The Ximuwu Lodge is the best example I have come across of luxury accessible accommodation in a beautiful setting delivering an uncompromised ability to fully participate in all the activities on offer. It sets the gold standard in accessible tourism and the thought and care that has been invested in developing the Lodge ensures that everyone who stays there is able to enjoy all that is on offer in the Klaserie region. Find out more: ximuwu.com