

Family-focused fun and conferencing in the bush



By [Brian Berkman](#)

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The Pilanesberg Game Reserve near Rustenburg is especially appealing because of its close proximity to Pretoria and easy access within the hour. From OR Tambo airport in Gauteng it is just two-and-a-half hours journey, a major time saving for guests who typically travel twice as far and more into the Kruger National Park. And, because of its Malaria-free status and compact size when compared to other reserves, the chances of encountering at least four of the Big Five are strong.

For over 33 years Kwa Maritane has been accommodating guests who want the bush experience initially as a timeshare offering and then, following increased demand, as a hotel too. Today Kwa Maritane can accommodate 600 guests including the timeshare self-catering units and up to 400 guests for cinema-style conferencing.



Conference upscale

Reservations manager, Lerato Thibedi says that mostly conferencing groups are around the 100 mark, but Kwa Maritane can scale up or down as needed. “Over the years we have worked with many event coordinators and have a number of experiences we can offer guests from climbing wall activities to other bush-based team building activities.”



As the lodge is in the centre of the platinum mining belt, a lot of business comes from the surrounding areas, but also from further afield. “We can manage up to 200 guests classroom style for meetings and have capacity for a number of breakaway rooms and refreshment stations within our conferencing area, which includes dedicated espresso stations and satellite bar facilities,” she adds.

Resident manager, Johan Rossouw says that boma dinners are always a favourite for guests who want to eat around the fire pit under the stars. Kwa Maritane has two boma offerings - a more intimate one within the gates of the lodge and a larger boma to accommodate 300 guests complete with toilet facilities about a 10 minute drive beyond the gates, deeper into the reserve. “Boma dinners are available to guests twice a week on Wednesday and Saturday, but for groups we use the boma on demand. We offer the full kitchen set up, but cooked on open coals - potjies (a favourite South African stew cooked in a three-legged black iron pot) like the kudu stew, which is very popular and even grilled dorado and other fish. The boma experience is the classic South African braai (BBQ) enjoyed under the stars. Herman Loubser is one of the field guides at Kwa Maritane. During our day time drive to view the boma he points out a zebra and Gnu hanging around the gates to the boma. “On this morning’s game drive we encountered our lions. Recently one of our lionesses gave birth and now we have our first Kwa Maritane-born cubs.” he says.



Affordable Options

Unlike most game lodges that offer an all-inclusive rate, Kwa Maritane offers guests a number of options to make their visit more affordable. “We have an all inclusive dinner, bed, breakfast and one game drive rate for R5,570 per couple and R4,070 per single room. Thibedi explains, “But we also offer more affordable rates with game-drive add-ons at R455 per person, R800 for a walking safari and R310 for our generous buffet dinner.”

Combining the Sunday spit braai and game drive is a very popular outing for day trippers like people from the Rustenburg area who can reach Kwa Maritane in 45 minutes.

Rossouw says that all accommodations, graded four star, are extremely comfortable and spacious and can be tailored to colleagues travelling together in the case of conferencing or buddy trips, into family units with two double beds and into options for king beds with a sleeper couch for children.



“Some of the downstairs rooms have interleading doors which are ideal for families travelling together, “ he says.

Although conferencing is a big revenue spinner for the lodge, catering to families is of equal importance. “We have many activities to appeal to travellers of all ages - from climbing walls and adult trampoline to tennis courts, giant outdoor chess, undercover Xbox and foosball games. We also have a full children’s programme on weekends and during school holidays with a children’s programme facilitator to allow parents some time off at the two pools.



According to Loubser they have game drives twice a day with the 4.30pm departure stopping for a beverage break before returning to the lodge at around 7.30pm. On boma nights guests arrive at the boma straight from the game drive. Rossouw suggests guests take in at least one game drive during their stay as they also have the option of self drives in the park, albeit at restricted times and limited to certain areas. “I recommend taking the 5.30am drive if you want to take photos as

the light is behind you and the park is much more photogenic in the softer morning light.” A standout feature of Kwa Maritane is a hide which is accessed by a long underground tunnel. “Our hide is world famous and our guests often visit www.wildearth.com to view the hide in real time. We have cameras filming the water hole and light the area at night. We also broadcast the hide images to all rooms.



Because Kwa Maritane is so established, it is set in magnificent gardens with the views of the spectacular rock that gives ‘The Place of the Rock’ its name.

Kwa Maritane is a Legacy Resort. See www.legacyhotels.co.za/en/hotels/kwamaritane for more details.

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