

Responsible Tourism Policy

Parsons Hilltop Safari Camp · Parsons House · Parsons River Camp

Why this matters to us

At Parsons Hilltop, the bush is our home! Living in the bush makes us naturally aware and care for our surroundings, with our heart being with conservation, sustainability and living 'eco-friendly' in the deeper meaning of the popular word. It is how plants, animals, soil, water and air live together and depend on each other. So "eco-friendly" literally means "friendly to the ecosystem". In practice people use it to mean that something does little or no harm to the environment. This is exactly what we practise at Parsons Hilltop!

Opened in 2018, we want to keep it this way: for our guests, for the animals and for the people who live here, today and for many years to come.

So caring for the bush is simply part of how we run our camps, every single day. Our approach follows the four areas of the South African National Standard for Responsible Tourism (SANS 1162): how we run our business, the local economy, people and culture, and the environment. Here is how we do it.

Every stay helps protect the reserve

Our camps lie in Parsons Nature Reserve, part of the Balule Nature Reserve: a vast, unfenced wilderness, openly connected to the Kruger National Park and home to the Big Five and many other special animals.

Keeping an area this size wild and safe is a team effort. Every lodge, every guest and every transfer company entering the reserve contributes to it, and so do we:

- Annual reserve levies as members of the reserve

- Traversing fees for the game drive routes we use
- Commercial use fees for hosting guests in the reserve, on top of our normal levies
- A conservation levy and car fee paid by every guest who stays with us

So when you stay with us, you are part of this too. Thank you!

The Bush

Wildlife, water, energy
and waste

We share this land with the wildlife, so we use its water and energy with care and keep our footprint small.

WATER AND ENERGY

- Our water comes from our own borehole, and we save it wherever we can. We encourage our guests to use water responsibly and to reuse their towels.

LESS WASTE, LESS PLASTIC

- Fresh drinking water in jugs is free for every guest, so fewer plastic bottles

- Afri Earth natural ingredient amenities in refillable dispensers, instead of small single-use bottles

- Biodegradable cleaning products throughout the camp

- We work with a group whatsapp for exchanging information because we work almost 100% paperless.

- We think before we buy, and we separate all our waste for recycling

- Once our waste leaves the camp, it is in the hands of the local municipality. We focus on creating as little waste as possible from the start

When something in the kitchen or lodge needs replacing, we choose durable materials like wood, glass and bamboo, made to last for years

FROM OUR KITCHEN

- Every meal is a plated surprise menu, cooked fresh for the guests in camp that day, instead of a buffet. We cook exactly what is needed, and every plate gets enjoyed

- Our surprise menu changes every day: breakfast, lunch and dinner are different each day of the week, so a week with us brings 21 different meals
- Portions follow standard serving sizes: satisfying and well balanced, with room left for dessert
- We ask about dietary wishes before arrival, so each meal is made for the guest who eats it
- We ask arriving guests if they will be with us for lunch at 14:00, so we cook just the right amount
- Seasonal menus, based on the fresh produce our local suppliers have to offer
- Our ingredients come from local suppliers
- Kitchen scraps are composted
- Our wine list is proudly South African, and our beers come in glass bottles
- WILDLIFE
- Our guides know the bush and its animals well, and every game drive respects the wildlife and its home

We are part of this area, and we spend our money as close to home as we can.

Local

Buying and working local

- We buy from local suppliers, so our money stays in the area and supply lines stay short
- We grow steadily and carefully, in a way that supports our team and our long-term business.

Our team comes from the area, and they are the heart of every stay.

People

Our team, neighbours and guests

- Our team comes from the local community
- Everyone is treated fairly and works in a safe environment

- We train our team and give them room to learn and grow
- We love sharing the stories of the bush, its wildlife and its people with our guests
- We respect and celebrate local culture and heritage

You are part of it too!

Small things make a big difference out here. We would love you to join us:

- Refill your bottle from our free water jugs
- Use water and electricity with care, the sun and our borehole work hard for us
- Let us know before you arrive if you will be with us in time for lunch at 14:00
- Enjoy the animals from a respectful distance
- Take home memories and leave only footprints

Guided by South African law and standards

South Africa has strong laws to protect its nature, its people and its visitors. We follow them, and our approach is guided by the country's own responsible tourism standards.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

- Tourism Act 3 of 2014, which promotes sustainable and responsible tourism in South Africa
- National Minimum Standard for Responsible Tourism (SANS 1162:2011)
- Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism (2002)

NATURE AND CONSERVATION

- National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998
- National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003
- National Environmental Management: Waste Act 59 of 2008

- National Water Act 36 of 1998
- The rules of the Balule Nature Reserve

OUR TEAM

- Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997
- Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993

Our promise

This policy covers all our camps: Parsons Hilltop Safari Camp, Parsons House and Parsons River Camp. Every member of our team and every supplier knows about it.

We look at it again every year and keep improving as we grow. Do you have an idea or a question? We would love to hear from you at reservations@parsonshilltop.com.

Ready to reconnect with nature?

We look forward to welcoming you in the bush!

Your safari hosts in the Greater Kruger

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