

DEPARTURES

Safari Spa Experiences That Will Have You at One With Nature



Stevie Mann/Courtesy Bushtops Camps' Mara Bushtops

Views of wildlife are just a bonus at these incredible African wellness centers.

By Jordi Lippe-McGraw on December 04, 2019

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[Going on safari](#) is a [bucket list item](#) for many travelers. It's a trip that's filled with adventure, nature, romance, and thrill, unlike any other vacation. It also happens to be where you can experience some of [the best spa treatments in the world](#). Yes, despite being in remote locations, several hotels and safari outfitters managed to create luxe wellness treatments to ease any aches from travel and offer a glimpse into local traditions. Here are some of the best ones throughout Africa.

Royal Malewane, South Africa



Courtesy The Royal Portfolio

The Waters of [Royal Malewane Bush Spa](#) at Royal Malewane safari lodge in Greater Kruger National Park, South Africa, is arguably among the best safari lodge spas in the world. Their Royal Face and Body signature treatment stands out as it's a 180-minute journey that begins

with a full-body scrub in an African bath, followed by a body wrap, an hour-long full-body massage, and ends with an African Essential Facial. Or, opt for The Royal Thaba Massage, which is a deep tissue massage treatment that incorporates the African “Knobkierrie” stick to revive stressed muscles and relieve tension.

Mombo, Botswana

Imagine, after a long day of [game viewing](#), relaxing with unobstructed views of the Okavango Delta. That’s precisely what happens at [Mombo](#) and Little Mombo Camp, where the backdrop for the spa is the vast wilderness. Taking inspiration from its surroundings, the unique wellness center offers treatments designed to reflect the natural environment and invoke a deep sense of calm. Mombo’s signature treatment is the Soul of Africa massage, which uses marula oil mixed with a floral blend.

Arijiju, Kenya



Crookes and Jackson/Courtesy Arijiju

The spa here is open to the wilderness, and all products are made by [Arijju](#)'s head therapist Frida, who incorporates the very best of Kenyan ingredients, from wild jasmine and sweet African basil from the garden to large avocados and olive oil made on Mount Kenya. Body treatments incorporate traditional African and Samburu massage techniques and can be taken either in the spa or out in the bush with elephants watching nearby. Guests also begin each day with a sunrise meditation on the roof of the house where they can spot giraffes, black rhino, prides of lion, and the endangered Grévy's zebra. A local Samburu healer is also on hand to teach you about traditional medicinal and healing treatments.

Four Seasons Safari Lodge, Tanzania



Richard Waite/Courtesy Four Seasons Safari Lodge

The Four Seasons is known for its top-notch spas around the world. And the [Four Seasons Safari Lodge](#), an [American Express Fine Hotels & Resorts](#) property, in the heart of the Serengeti is no different. The property just launched an exclusive, new menu at its [Serengeti Kani Spa](#) in partnership with South African, organic spa brand Terres d'Afrique. The treatments range from Ancestral Rituals, inspired by local wisdom and traditions, to Migration Massages. They also have the Big 5 Kani Wellness Safari, which is a multi-day wellbeing

journey that focused on the five energies of the Serengeti and treats mind, body, and spirit over two days.

Ikirunga Spa at Virunga Lodge, Rwanda

Many tend to think of the Big Five when it comes to safaris. But one of the most extraordinary wildlife experiences is a gorilla trek in Rwanda. Here you spend a couple of days seeking out the endangered mountain gorillas. And one of the preeminent lodges in the area, [Virunga Lodge](#), launched the new Ikirunga Spa last year, helping guests relax and rejuvenate after hours hiking through the mountains. There are two open fire treatment views with incredible views of the Virunga Mountains as well as a wood-burning African sauna onsite to unwind. Best yet, one 30-minute complimentary massage is available per guest per stay.

Amani Spa Village at Bushtops Camps' Mara Bushtops, Kenya



Courtesy Bushtops Camps' Mara Bushtops

[Mara Bushtops](#) offers the award-winning Amani spa complete with a sauna, steam room, jacuzzi, cold plunge, and a heated infinity pool designed for a night-time dip. Here you can enjoy the Jewel of Africa Bush Bath, which includes a soak overlooking wild bush and a massage using African warrior sticks. The entire experience is two hours and can be done solo or side-by-side with your partner.

Belmond Khwai River Lodge, Botswana

This is [the perfect base](#) for an adventure into the Moremi Wildlife Reserve in Botswana. Wildlife can be spotted all year round, including giraffe, buffalo, lion, leopard, cheetah and wild dogs. But as far as the spa, there are two single spa treatment rooms, and a couple's treatments can be coordinated on guests' private deck. Products include locally-sourced African botanicals, and the treatment menu gives a sense of place. For example, a 45-minute Soul of Africa Body Conditioning Back Massage, which uses African Marula oil that is blended with Neroli oil; and a 90-minute African Potato Body Experience, where the potato wrap softens, soothes, and improves skin hydration.

andBeyond Tengile River Lodge, South Africa



Courtesy andBeyond

Opened in South Africa's Sabi Sand Game Reserve in December 2018, [the new property](#) is set in an elusive area with few travelers coming through. After a game drive spotting animals such as lions, leopards and elephants, guests can be pampered in the spa with [Healing Earth](#) products, a range of eco-friendly spa amenities made with African ingredients, such as Kalahari melon, marula, and pinotage. Guests can also get a workout in the gym while spotting the elephant and buffalo that graze in the river through floor-to-ceiling glass windows.

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