



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AT SINGITA SABI SAND



CONSERVATION

Sabi Sand is a privately owned game reserve, adjacent to the Kruger National Park. Singita Sabi Sand forms a core part of this reserve and it has been owned by the Bailes family since 1926. Together with other private owners within this reserve, the family has acted as responsible custodians of this area. The Sabi Sand Reserve, crossed by the Sand River, has groves of Acacia thornveld and Marula trees giving way to open expanses of grassland where zebra, antelope and wildebeest graze freely. This reserve is known for its large concentration of game, including the 'Big 5' - lion, rhino, elephant, buffalo and leopard.

ECOTOURISM

Low Impact Hospitality

The Singita Sabi Sand lodges have, over the years, received much special recognition for their ecotourism efforts. Guests are assured of a safari wherein infrequent encounters with other game vehicles minimizes pressure on the land and wildlife.

Employment

Two hundred staff assist Singita Sabi Sand to provide the requisite level of service to guests and ensure the protection of the biodiversity of the reserve. Most of these staff are from the

local communities of Justicia, Lilydale and other villages in close proximity to the outskirts of the reserve.

Field Guide Training Academy

Singita has established an in-house Field Guide and Tracker Training Academy under the care of one of our most experienced and knowledgeable guides. A comprehensive six-month training programme covers all areas of field guiding and tracking from an in-depth understanding of all flora and fauna, to responding appropriately and professionally to the specific needs and interests of each of our guests. The in-depth course also covers practicalities such as weapon handling, first aid and even a wine course to a certification level by the Cape Wine Academy. The Academy is focused upon identifying and developing the potential within young, passionate environmentalists and those local staff members who have a passion and a hunger for a career in guiding and tracking.

Singita Community Tours

During their stay, guests are able to participate in tours to visit the Shangaan-speaking communities that live in local villages on the outskirts of the reserve. Initially these tours were organised by a Singita staff member, Zamani Mathebula, a waiter at Ebony Lodge who was passionate about his local culture and its history.



PLAYING A ROLE AT SINGITA SABI SAND

Financial contributions from Singita, the Community Tour and Singita guests supplement each other and enable targeted and effective support for worthy causes in the local area. Guest contributions can be invested as requested but, if guidance is sought, we encourage funds to be channelled into the following 3 areas:

Support for Schools

- Contributions of any value will be put to sound use.

The Tshemba Hosi Care Centre

- Contributions of any value will be put to sound use.

Sponsorship of local students wishing to attend the Singita Field Guide and Tracker Academy

- The sponsorship of a student from local communities is R30,000 (±\$3,000) for the 6 month intensive programme, including their board and lodging.

The Singita Community Development Trust is a section 18A company which ensures contributions made to it from within South Africa are tax effective. Details are as follows:

Singita Community Development Trust
Bank: First National Bank
Branch: Durban Corporate
Account Number: 6201 921 0476
Branch Number: 22 36 26
Swift Address: FirNzAj

For further information on projects, please liaise with the Singita HR & Community Development Manager, Pam Richardson:
E-mail: pam.r@singita.com Tel: +27 21 683 3424

Subsequently, with Singita's support, Zamani formed his own tour company called Zamani Cultural Tours, which now hosts Singita's guests on informative and interesting guided excursions to local villages.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In 1998, Singita Sabi Sand launched its community development programme in earnest, with the aim of implementing a sustainable programme that would deliver tangible benefits to the local community. Funds contributed by Singita, its guests who are inspired to invest in development programmes, as well as funds generated by the Community Tours, are housed in the Singita Community Development Trust Fund and used to support multiple and various development programmes.

General Education

There are a number of primary and high schools in the local area, many of which are educating the children of our staff. These schools are inadequately funded and require ongoing support. Many of the children are orphaned and are inadequately cared for in terms of food and clothing; or are from very poor homes that cannot afford to pay school fees. The projects with which we have been involved, range in size and include the purchasing of stationery, text and library books, school clothing, computers and the sponsorship of individual learners. Singita sponsors the local under-14 soccer league, which it helped establish, and is now active within 18 local primary schools.

Singita has also worked closely with these schools to assist them develop their infrastructural requirements that the Education Department was not able to fund. These include the construction of school kitchens, school halls and ablution facilities. Singita responds to the needs identified by the various schools and at

any one time is aware of their priorities. In collaboration with the Education Department, there is a pre-school development programme being conducted in 12 pre-schools in the local area. The objective of this programme is to ensure that children are well prepared to capitalise on formal schooling which they enter at six years and older.

The Tshemba Hosi Care Centre

This centre cares for 100 physically and/or mentally challenged children and Singita has been integrally involved since its early days when it was based in a church hall. Singita has worked with them to build a new centre and now maintain an ongoing close relationship with them, responding to specific needs as and when they are brought to our attention. This includes providing assistance with their property and centre maintenance, and improvement issues.

