

# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



## Safari Is the Swahili Word for Journey

Dear Friends,

I had long anticipated our Africa trip with the [Exeter Safari Company](#), having gotten to know them as a [Rebecca Recommends client](#), and was eager to experience all the winning compliments I'd heard. This trip couldn't come soon enough.

Charlie and I had never visited Botswana and we waited with bated breath for the epic wildlife encounters of which we had only daydreamed.

# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



We were fortunate enough to be accompanied by consummate host Greg Tepper, co-founder of the Exeter Safari Company, with our entire itinerary planned by co-founder and Africa destination magic maker Scott Simpson. As they are a Rebecca Recommends client, I already knew of the company's energy, knowledge and experience in Africa and the carefully crafted trips they have available. Even with that said, we were blown away by the unparalleled first-hand knowledge, meticulous planning and incredible experiences that go beyond your "standard safari," and the decadent accommodations we enjoyed throughout our trip. It's quite impossible to express all the wonder and joy that came from our journey, but I hope as you read through my highlights here that you'll come to understand why the Exeter Safari Company is the clear choice when planning affordable luxury and ultra-luxe Africa travel.

But first, Cape Town. We stayed for five nights in the ideally located [The Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa](#) as a preface for our safari. I'd love to tell you all about it. Read on....

# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*

For those who have considered a Botswana safari but are wary of the long flight and travel time to get there, we suggest breaking up the journey with a stay at a [Red Carnation Hotel](#) in London. This is a delightful way to get to know London, or return to a favorite neighborhood, before arriving well rested and excited for your safari.

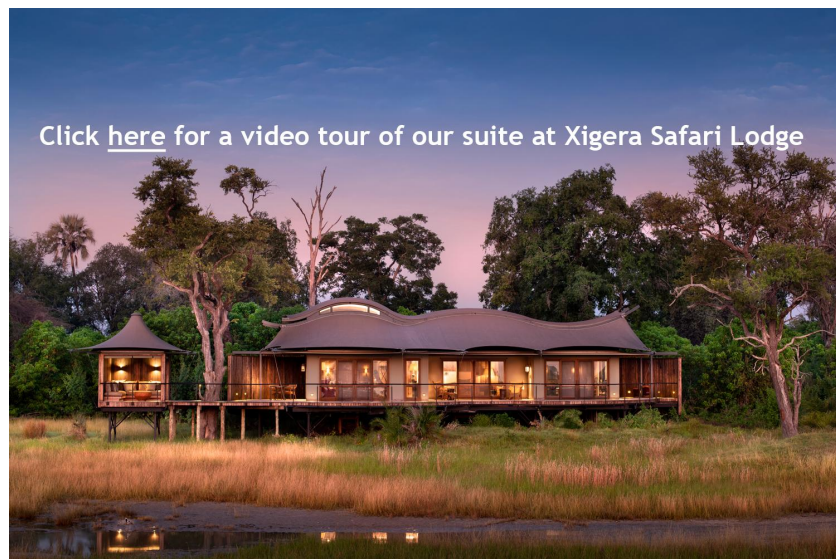
Please reach out if you have any questions about the accommodations we experienced, the Exeter Safari Company or The Red Carnation Hotel Collection. I hope these highlights inspire the creation of amazing Africa journeys for your clients.

Fondly,

*Rebecca*



PS. Take a tour around our suite at [Xigera Safari Lodge](#)



Click [here](#) for a video tour of our suite at Xigera Safari Lodge

# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



*A beautiful view at Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa*

## **Luxury at the Very Tip of Africa**

Our journey began with a five-night stay in Cape Town at the tremendously appealing Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa. The hotel's enviable location makes for easy sightseeing and exploring. It's a short drive to the Camps Bay Beaches, Table Mountain, the V&A Waterfront and Constantia.

Chauffeured and guided private tours are readily available through the hotel or via the Exeter Safari Company as part of a full itinerary. With five nights to relax and enjoy, we were able to soak up our surroundings, from giggling at penguins at Boulders Beach to exploring the Cape of Good Hope.

# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



Our dinner at La Colombe, named the number-one restaurant in the whole of Africa, was a true highlight of our stay. I highly recommend arranging a meal in this treehouse-like setting at the Silvermist Wine Estate, where dining has been elevated to an art form. From the complex Karoo lamb masterpiece to the tuna “La Colombe” (miniature yellowfin tuna with micro herbs, avocado puree and umami broth), Chef James Gaag will impress and delight even the most discerning of palates.



# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



**Note:** If your clients have visited Cape Town before, you may consider recommending that they visit [Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Reserve and Wellness Retreat](#) (a Red Carnation property), or travel through Durban to the majestic [The Oyster Box](#) on the Umhlanga beachfront, prior to their Botswana safari.



# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*

## A Safari of Sublime Proportions

Following our peaceful stay in Cape Town, we set off to meet up with Greg Tepper, co-founder of the Exeter Safari Company. Our itinerary included eight nights in Botswana, staying in some of the most upscale camps the country has to offer.

From Duba Plains in the heart of the Okavango Delta, to the astonishingly luxe and private Xigera, we were treated to a safari like no other. Here's a taste of what we experienced at these magnificent camps.



*Specially designed Toyota Land Cruisers made the perfect vehicles for picture-taking.*

## Duba Plains

Imagine a soak in a copper, standalone bathtub, where nothing stands between you and the vast expanse of the Okavango Delta and wandering wildlife. These are the possibilities at the divine Duba Plains camp. Our bespoke tent was one of just five (there's also a two-bedroom Duba Plains suite), each designed to blend into the landscape and evoke the classic African safari style of the 1920s.

Our daily schedule was flexible, allowing for perfect wildlife-viewing opportunities. Some of our ventures, in specially designed Toyota Land Cruisers, continued into the evening hours in search of nocturnal species.

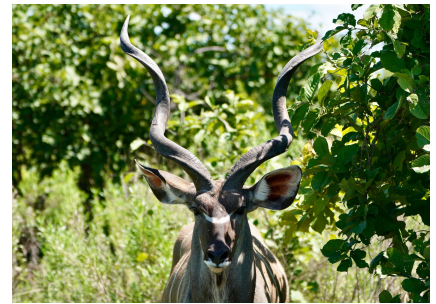
# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



We were free to mingle with the few other guests in the raised dining room, comfortable lounge and library, or retreat to our gorgeous tent to savor our surroundings and the stirring peacefulness of the 33,000-hectare private reserve, watching wildlife parade by, or to take a dip in the plunge pool on our private verandah.

It's little wonder National Geographic filmmakers and conservationists Dereck and Beverly Joubert chose Duba Plains as their home base for filming.



# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



## Selinda Explorers Camp

In prime predator habitat within the private 130,000-hectare Selinda Reserve of northern Botswana, Selinda Explorers Camp takes the authentic safari scene and adds a modern twist and congenial hospitality.

At the peak of the dry season (late September), you would find countless animals along the Selinda Spillway's banks, from herds of elephants to prides of lions to a tower of giraffes.



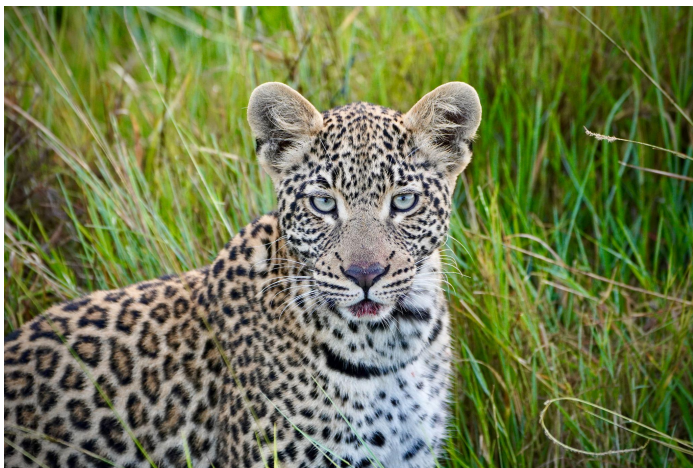
# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



We so enjoyed the sophisticated, yet casual feel of the camp, where guests gather around the Bedouin-style main area and dine in the open-air lounge and tents. Whilst we dined or enjoyed a sundowner cocktail, feeling like we were on our own private safari in the 1920s, the attentive staff provided professional, friendly and discreet service.

Our luxury tent was outfitted with explorers' trunks, campaign-style furniture made from recycled hardwoods and soft appointments from Zanzibar and the East. Selinda accommodations are unassuming, yet heavy on style and a spirit of adventure.



# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



## Zarafa

“Zarafa” means “beloved one” in Arabic. The lodge of the same name received its moniker for a giraffe that was presented to Charles X of France in 1826. Today, luxury-seeking safari guests are smitten with this decadent lodge on the Selinda Reserve linking the Okavango Delta with Chobe National Park.

During our time here, we had the opportunity to seek out the leopard, lion, elephant, buffalo, lechwe, zebra and giraffe that wander through regularly.



# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*

Our expansive guest tent was set on raised decking, under canvas. Inside, deep reds and browns made for a rich feel throughout the bedroom and open-plan bathroom with its exquisite copper claw-foot tub. The extensive deck featured a private plunge pool and outdoor shower - just dreamy. When we felt the urge, we wandered to the camp's main lounge and dining area under a canopy of ebony trees.

Active days were spent on safari in custom-built Land Cruises specially designed for wildlife photography with fold-down screens, raised roofs, photographic bars and multi-plug inverters. A particular highlight of Zарафа: the *HES Zib*, the camp's special pontoon boat that allows guests to explore the Zibadianja Lagoon and get as close as possible to hippos and elephants in the water.



## [Xigera Safari Lodge](#)

And on to Xigera - the ultimate of the ultimate when it comes to Africa safari lodges. Pronounced "kee-jera," Xigera is named for the Pied Kingfisher that lives in the watery channels of Botswana's Moremi Game Reserve.

Every aspect of the experience is handcrafted to stir guests' souls - and that it did. From the evocative interiors to the one-of-a-kind wildlife encounters, we felt reborn into a realm of luxury uncommon to the safari scene.

# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



Xigera Safari Lodge prides itself on showcasing one extraordinary lifetime moment after another. The best part is that you feel gloriously on your own if that's your pleasure. The world drifts away and it's as if you and your favorite person are alone in Africa, with every creature comfort imaginable ... and then some. From the delicious fine dining that we felt was worthy of a Michelin-star, to our huge guest suite, where we were cocooned by the boughs of the indigenous forest, to the pampering outdoor showers, Xigera is absolutely divine. The camp is set across two islands, with each suite set on raised stilts to allow for wildlife and Okavango waters to pass beneath.

Exceptional staff members are on hand to provide a truly personal and memorable safari experience, ensuring that guests feel at one with nature. Even in the bush, we were so coddled. We are big martini connoisseurs and we had what I believe is the very best martini of my life, and in such a sublime setting, where we could literally hear the lions roaring whilst we enjoyed our cocktails and our food - just so well done.

Xigera is the place for your Africa safari clients who seek the most ultra-luxe experience, a place where there's no reason to see other guests if you choose not to, a place that is simply the best in all of Africa. We were in heaven.

# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



## **A Stop at Bouchard Finlayson**

Capping off a truly excellent two weeks, Charlie and I had the chance to visit Bouchard Finlayson, one of South Africa's most-awarded boutique wine estates and sister vineyard to Red Carnation Hotels. Set in a gorgeous hillside location of the Hemel-en-Aarde (Heaven and Earth) valley, the vineyards of Bouchard Finlayson are renowned for their award-winning Pinot Noir, elegant Chardonnay and terroir-driven Sauvignon Blanc. Each Red Carnation property showcases and serves the delicious collection of Bouchard Finlayson wines.

Back home, we think often, and so fondly, of our first time in Botswana. One of the biggest luxuries, particularly at Xigera, was that it was simply us and the animals ... no other people. When we were at Duba Plains, we spent the morning tracking endangered wild dogs, including a pregnant female, as they feasted on a kill, feeling so privileged for this special time spent watching their behavior.

# REBECCA RECOMMENDS

*Inspirational destinations & properties of excellence*



I will also never forget spending a couple of hours with two huge male lions - brothers - as they wandered through the plains and spent time by the water. One was cleaning his teeth of some grass and we were struck by how unaffected they were by our presence, and how rare an opportunity it was to be so close by.

Please reach out if we can answer any questions about these spectacular experiences and lodges. It would be our pleasure to connect you to these esteemed suppliers.

