

5 NIGHT SELF DRIVE

2 nights Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge
3 Nights Thonga Beach Lodge

**KWAZULU
NATAL**



1: Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge

Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park, KwaZulu Natal

Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge is within a 3.5hr drive from King Shaka International Airport and a 1hr 30min drive from Richards Bay Airport. It is situated on the western boundary of Africa's oldest proclaimed Game Reserve Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park, Northern KwaZulu Natal. Rhino Ridge Safari lodge is the only private lodge within the park. With its four star accommodation, guests are offered spectacular scenery and excellent safari opportunities in the heart of Big 5 territory.

On arrival at Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge you will be greeted by a refreshing drink and welcomed by our friendly team who will give you a short orientation of the lodge and its facilities before showing you to your accommodation. After a quick refresh, we will be waiting to serve you high tea on the veranda at the main lodge which offers spectacular views over the entire reserve. Here you will meet your guide who will prepare you for your first safari experience offering some useful pointers about the dos and don'ts of the bush.

By now you will be eager to board your safari vehicle to explore the magnificent hills and valleys of the Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park. At sunset your guide will take you to a special spot to enjoy drinks and snacks where after, you will travel into the night looking for nocturnal creatures like leopards, owls and jackals. When you get back to the lodge you will be given time to freshen up for dinner and then enjoy dinner on the dining deck or in the restaurant. Sit around the fire late into the night discussing the days sightings and legendary tales of Africa against a backdrop of a million stars.

2: Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge

After an early morning wake-up, fresh coffee, tea and rusks (a South African tradition!), everybody departs with the guides for an early morning game drive or walk. Be sure to have a jacket and scarf as it can get really chilly on the open 4x4 vehicle. Sunscreen, hats and sunglasses will also be needed for later in the day. Nothing is predictable in the bush, therefore each safari offers a potentially new and unique experience. Our guides will share their wealth of bush experience which involves the identification of animals, trees, grasses, insects and birds. In addition to this, they share their knowledge of the medicinal uses of plants and local folk lore, all the while looking for the infamous Big 5!

When you return to the lodge you will be greeted by a hearty brunch. Now it is time for you to relax and imbibe the natural beauty of Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge. You may wish to spend your day being pampered in our spa, do a few laps at the pool or simply relax in the privacy of your room, enjoying the endless views from your private balcony. Make sure you are back in time for high tea and the evening game drive. Hopefully this time you will spot all those other animals still on your bucket list. On returning to the lodge you will have time to freshen up before coming through for a delicious dinner.

3: Thonga Beach Lodge

iSimangaliso Wetland Park, KwaZulu Natal

After returning from your early morning game drive or walk you will have time to enjoy your breakfast while taking in the last views of Hluhluwe iMfolozi before you wind out of the park and make your way north to Thonga Beach Lodge. Those guests who are not travelling in a 4x4 will be met at the Coastal Cashew Factory by a Thonga Beach Representative and transferred to the lodge. Remember hat/cap and a warm jacket for the 1hr transfer in an open 4x4 to the lodge.

On arrival you will be welcomed with a refreshing drink and given a brief orientation of the lodge before being shown to your room and given time to unpack and relax before coming through for lunch. After enjoying one of the many activities hosted at Thonga, you will have time to freshen up and enjoy a cocktail at the bar before settling down for a delicious meal under the stars.

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4 & 5: Thonga Beach Lodge

Thonga Beach Lodge is set on the secluded Mabibi Bay, in the heart of the iSimangaliso (formerly Greater St Lucia) Wetland Park, an internationally recognised World Heritage Site. With direct access onto the pristine shores of the Maputaland coast, this lodge is the ideal place to discover one of the last unspoilt and undeveloped wilderness beaches left on the African continent. Mabibi is a magical place of tranquil swimming bays and snorkelling reefs, coastal forests, grasslands, bush, shimmering lakes and exquisite sandy beaches. Its clear, warm waters offer superb snorkelling and fantastic offshore SCUBA diving.

The 12 thatched en-suite rooms have been carefully constructed in the coastal dune forest to ensure minimum impact on the environment and maximum guest privacy. Each room has a double vanity, stone bath, indoor shower, bar fridge, air-conditioning, ceiling fan and mosquito net. Deluxe rooms have their own private plunge pools.

Activities at Thonga Beach Lodge include SCUBA diving, Open Ocean experiences, kayaking and sundowners at Lake Sibaya, guided snorkelling, seasonal turtle drives/walks, Tsonga Cultural tours and forest walks. Whether you are a walker or a diver, take advantage of the wealth of activities that await you in this beautiful hideaway, or simply relax with a Spa treatment or on the beach deck.

SCUBA diving at Mabibi is phenomenal. Our professional lodge diving team can accommodate enthusiasts, from the beginner to the veteran. For those who don't dive, we have an Open Ocean Experience. An exciting launch through the surf in front of the lodge takes you beyond the breakers to a world of dolphins, whales and other creatures. The warm Indian Ocean supports a myriad of fish and marine life. Guests can sometimes swim with dolphins or whale sharks, or snorkel with Manta rays and giant turtles.

In summer, there are nocturnal walks and drives along the beach in search of pre-historic turtles laying their eggs. Witness the culmination of an incredible journey as giant Leatherback and Loggerhead turtles come ashore to lay their eggs in carefully prepared nests. Turtle tracking is offered in the evening from November to end of February. The laying takes place from Nov to Jan and hatchlings arrive from end Dec to end February. Every precaution is taken to ensure these magnificent creatures are not disturbed during the laying process and data collected from the turtle drives is submitted to the Ezemvelo Turtle Monitoring program.

6: End of Arrangements

After breakfast you will check out of Thonga and be returned to the Coastal Cashews where you will continue with your itinerary

Includes

Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge

2 nights accommodation Safari Room, upgradeable to Bush Villa. All meals, teas and coffees, 2 safari drives per day

Thonga Beach Lodge

3 nights accommodation in Forest View room upgradeable to Ocean View or Deluxe Ocean View, meals, teas and coffees, use of snorkelling equipment, guided walks, cultural tours, kayaking and sundowners at Lake Sibaya. Nightly turtle walks (Nov-Feb only)

Excludes

Park fees, drinks, laundry, gratuities and items of a personal nature. Transfers.

Thonga Beach Lodge

Spa treatments, SCUBA diving, Open Ocean experience, dive equipment hire and 4x4 turtle tracking drives (Nov-Feb only)

Rhino Ridge Safari Lodge

Spa Treatments and day trips out of the park. Guided safari walks.

Note!

Extra days can be added at either lodge and other Isibindi Africa Lodges may be added to this itinerary.

Contact marketing@isibindi.co.za for your tailor made package.

Honeymoon Add On

All packages can be upgraded to a Honeymoon Package