

# Kruger

## in Style

For countless South Africans the mention of a Kruger Park holiday invokes memories of soggy road-trip sandwiches, cars crammed with provisions to feed the family and long days cruising the tar roads. If you're on a budget the self-catering accommodation run by SANParks is a great way to stretch your Rands, but if you've got a little cash to burn then the bushveld is your oyster.

**Text:** Richard Holmes | **Images:** ©Jock Safari Lodge, Singita Game Reserves, &Beyond and Tanda Tula Safari Camp

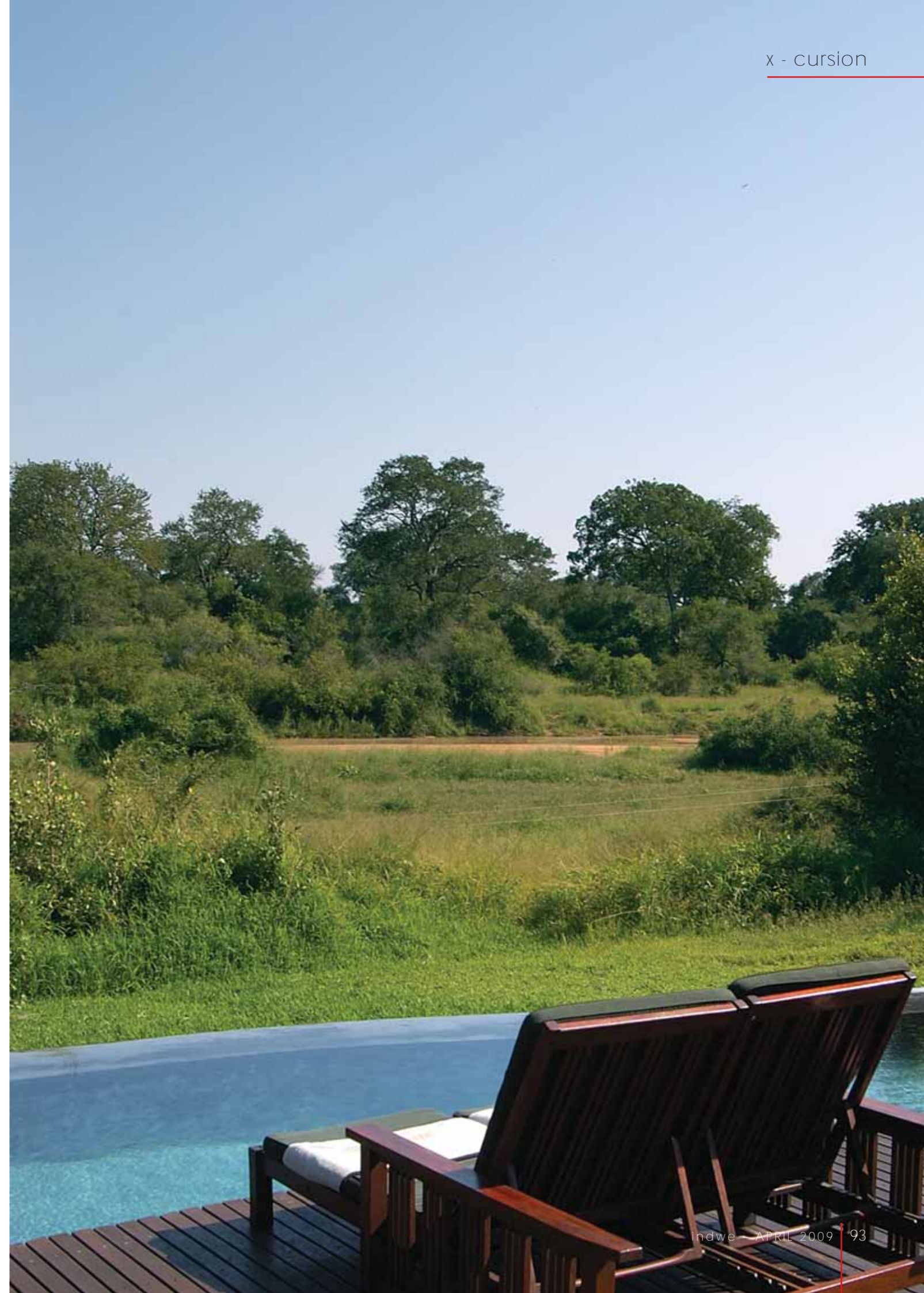
Your first port of call should be one of the private concessions within the park, which offer the best game-viewing Kruger has to offer, combined with luxurious accommodation, great food and excellent guides.

In the game-rich southern section of Kruger you'll find the Mantis Collection's Jock Safari Lodge ([www.jocksafarilodge.com](http://www.jocksafarilodge.com)). Sir Percy Fitzpatrick's bushveld tale about his faithful hound is one of South Africa's best-loved children's stories, and the lodge named in his honour is one of my favourite places to stay in the park.

Twelve air-conditioned suites combine the wilderness with just a touch of elegance. Throw in romantic mozzie nets, a bottle of wine in the fridge and stylish décor and you've got the perfect honeymoon getaway.

Feeling hot? No need to take a dip in the Mitomeni or Biyamiti Rivers (the lodge sits between the two), as your suite has a plunge pool where you can cool off between game drives. When you get tired of driving through the bushveld on your private 4x4 you can simply pull up a comfy chair on your private deck and →

As you'd expect, the game viewing is excellent, with plains game and rhino in abundance.





watch the wildlife stroll by – magic.

When it comes to views, it's hard to beat the magnificent Singita Lebombo (www.singita.com). In the eastern reaches of Kruger, Singita is regularly voted one of the world's top hotels and enjoys exclusive traversing rights to a large chunk of the Kruger National Park. As you'd expect, the game viewing is excellent, with plains game and rhino in abundance.

The jewel in the Singita group's

safari crown, each of the 15 five-star suites at Singita Lebombo has been designed to resemble an eagle's nest, perched on the craggy cliff-tops of the Lebombo Mountains on the border with Mozambique. It's not cheap by any means, but it is certainly worth every cent – this is one of those 'before-I-die' places to add to your list.

For a lodge with a difference, the bee-hive huts at the Hoyo Hoyo Tsonga Lodge (www.hoyohoyo.co.za) offer a

fascinating cultural safari experience. The lodge is justifiably proud of the area's Tsonga heritage, and all fabrics, décor and objet d'art have been sourced from the local Tsonga community. Staff at the lodge are happy to share the Tsonga way of life with guests, and fireside tales over dinner are a regular highlight.

Nothing grabbed you yet? Beyond the borders of Kruger you'll find dozens of lodges in private reserves, offering something for even the most →



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discerning safari-goer.

The tented camp of Ngala Private Game Reserve ([www.ngala.co.za](http://www.ngala.co.za)) is perched on the banks of the Timbavati River and offers an exceptional holiday under canvas. Their five-star tents offer lofty canvas ceilings, elephantine beds, wicker armchairs on the porch and flickering paraffin lamps to welcome you back after dinner on the deck.

The Ngala (which means 'lion' in Shangaan) reserve itself is a modest 14,000ha, but with fences dropped between the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve to the West and Kruger to the East, it's as diverse as if you were in the National Park.

The neighbouring Timbavati reserve, which dates back to 1956, is one of South Africa's most famous private reserves.

In the heart of the Timbavati is Tanda Tula Safari Camp ([www.tandatula.co.za](http://www.tandatula.co.za)), which has been a driving force

behind elephant conservation for the past five years, sponsoring the Save the Elephants Trans-boundary Elephant Research Project. It means you can kick back in five-star luxury knowing that the land is being well cared for, and what luxury it is!

Set on the banks of the Nharalumi riverbed, the lodge has just 12 en suite safari tents which offer spacious bathrooms, romantic outdoor showers and wide wooden decks overlooking the waterhole, so you can spot game with a G&T in hand! Once the sun has sunk below the western bushveld, head down to the main lodge for fine international cuisine with an African flavour, served under the stars in a traditional boma.

With thousands of hectares of pristine bushveld to explore, the private reserves of Kruger are the perfect place to feel like the king of the jungle. In style, of course! ✈️

### Kruger - When to go

The best time for game viewing is in the dry winter months when the bush is not too thick and animals are drawn to the perennial waterholes. Don't forget to dress up warmly for the chilly morning and evening game drives. At the end of spring the bush is full of newborns, which can make for magical sightings, while summer is hot and humid with frequent afternoon thunderstorms.



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