



## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Visit to Livingstone Safari in the South Luangwa and the Lower Zambezi

Dear Alison:

Rather than take up your time on the phone, I've decided to send you a short-ish e-mail about our vacation in Africa. I could go on and on and fear that I've been non-stop with my friends I'm so energized and thrilled by the experience. First of all, everything was first class. It was sort of a shock to one's system to be in the bush, occasionally glared at by an elephant or followed by lions ("Quick! Down your drinks and get in the jeep, lions are coming!") and then return to camp to be offered warm washcloths to clean up and then sherry served from a silver tray and a mini-home-baked quiche. An absolute delight!

We all fell in love with the hippos. They seem to have a great sense of humor when they are not scaring the bejesus out of you popping up a couple of yards from the canoe. However, I always had 100% confidence in our guides and they always knew how to handle any situation to the benefit of our safety as well as the animals.

The guides as well as our camp hosts were all extremely personable and couldn't do enough to make our experience as pleasant and educational as possible. As much as the animals and birds were an amazement, so was the geography and all of nature. Oh! And the food was outstanding.

Our visit to the local village in Tafika was a highlight. We were so pleased that we'd asked to do that. Michael is now known as "The white magic man" in the village as he did lots of magic tricks with the children. He was like the pied piper. I'm sure he and Karen will tell you much more.

We all took many, many photos which I don't think any of us have put onto our computers yet as it's a daunting task to edit, but will get to it soon. Still haven't unpacked my check in bag.

If I were to rate this vacation it would get an A++++. Thank you and Ian for having taken care of all the details so thoroughly and professionally. I would recommend your company to anyone interested in such a vacation. BTW we were the only guests at Tafika which made it even more special although each place we staid was unique and had much to offer. From the first day we wondered how the next place would hold up to this one, but we were never disappointed.

If there is anything in particular you'd like to ask about, please do so.

Regards,

**Jane Assimacopoulos, Aug 2010**



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**Safari to Private Game Reserve near Kruger/Mpumalanga**  
**Safari to Chobe Game Park and the Moremi Reserve**  
**Visit to Victoria Falls**

Dear Lynne,

I just wanted to tell you that Peggy and I had a TERRIFIC time on our recent safari to South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. We couldn't have asked for a better trip and we are already planning a return adventure. We were really impressed with the lodges where we stayed: Cheetah Plains, Muchenje, and Chitabe. All three were superlative. The people were incredibly friendly, helpful and knowledgeable about the area and the wildlife.

We were also just blown away by the diversity of the terrains we saw and the diversity of wildlife. I have been home for a week now and am still trying to process in my mind all that we saw. It was so overwhelming and so different than anything that I have ever seen that it will take me a while to fully comprehend just how much we saw and how much we learned about the countries we saw, the wildlife we encountered and the people we met.

I was also very impressed with the logistics of the trip. Everywhere we went, we were met by the people who were supposed to meet us when they were supposed to meet us and got us to where we were supposed to be on time. I have never experienced a vacation where there wasn't some small travel snafu, but that is exactly what happened with us - no mix ups, no problems, no issues. Everything went very smoothly and the staff that we met were friendly, helpful and knowledgeable.

The accommodations were also far superior to what we expected. Cheetah Plains was fantastic. I know it has recently changed hands, but we absolutely loved it there and will be going back. The facilities were amazing. We loved the new general managers, Brian and Chantel Rode, and our guide Abel mKansi. Muchenje was very nice as well and was very comfortable. Looking out from our front porch onto the river plains was an amazing sight we will never forget. Chitabe was also fantastic. We loved the staff, the layout of the camp, walking around on the catwalks and the variety of terrain and wildlife. The Okavango Delta will always be a special place for me and I really want to go back and explore that area in more depth. We also really liked the Rissington Inn and the Ilala Lodge. They were great respites from being in the bush and we loved staying at each place. By the way, Victoria Falls was breathtaking, even if we were there during the dry season and didn't get to see the full rush of water going over the falls.

Thank you for all you and the African Adventure staff did to make our vacation a dream come true. We will never forget it and will always treasure the pictures and memories we have of our vacation. We will also be sure to contact you when we are ready to go back to Africa. I can't wait to get back and experience it all over again.

**Mike Bean, Sep 2010**

**Kafue and Safari walking trails along the South Luangwa River**  
**Visit to Livingstone and Lower Zambezi**

Hello Kyle -

We have returned! Our Zambian safari was another wonderful trip full of new experiences, and great bird and animal sightings. New animals for us - puku, oribi, white rhino, 2 different mongoose, and civet. I can't remember all the new bird sightings - but one of them was the beautiful violet-backed starling.

We did many fun things - the balloon ride over Busanga Plains was superb; canoeing and motor boating on the Zambezi was delightful; we experienced a fun micro-light flight over Luangwa Valley; the helicopter rides in Kafue were also fun; our visit to Simonga Village was most interesting; viewing Vic Falls from the Zambian

side as well as Livingstone Island (in addition to our prior Zimbabwe visit ) has given us a great perspective; game drives and birding on the river was wonderful; fishing on the Zambezi was lots of fun; and sundowners anywhere in Africa are always a special time for us!

As far as camps, all of them were great accommodations. I think our absolute favorite was Old Mondoro - small and very comfortable, next to the river, and great game viewing in the area. Chiawa was also very nice but a bit "too too" for us. Camps in South Luangwa were good - Tafika was very comfortable and accommodating, and our favorite of the 3 bush camps; Chikoko was fun; and Crocodile was also very comfortable and more of a favorite than Chikoko. Kapinga was a lovely camp and we really enjoyed our time there. And Toka Leya - what a nice place to begin and end our safari!

Our African experiences are always enhanced by the many relationships we have with camp managers as well as all staff personnel. We love the exchanges we have with the staff at any camp as we can learn so much more about local customs from them.

...All in all, it was a great trip. We met many people who have safaried multiple times and who keep returning for new experiences. Guess we are not the only ones who have been captured by our Africa experiences.

What else can I say....

Thank you

**Gail and Bob Boyd, Sep 2010**

**Flying safari to Okavango Delta/Selinda**  
**Flying safari to Private Game Reserves near Kruger**  
Aloha All,

Once again, our safari is over, and we are re-living all the wonderful moments we experienced ----and thinking about where and how to spend our next safari!

Chitabe and Selinda were wonderful camps. In both, the managers and staff were very accommodating, the camp well-run and comfortable, and the game viewing great. Who thought we'd see leopards (sometimes multiple) on every game drive in Botswana, including a kill on our first night! I especially appreciated the environmental efforts at Selinda with no plastic water bottles, water purification, solar panels, etc. Our lasting memory was being chased by the matriarch of a breeding elephant herd--not a mock charge, but a full on gallop!

Jabulani was everything we'd hoped it would be ---and more. The accommodations and service and food were extremely luxurious, but still in keeping with the spirit of Africa. Feeling a part of the Africa environment and culture is a significant part of the safari experience, and we were not disappointed. And I will never forget the elephant encounters. We loved meeting and playing with the elephants in their stable and at sundowners, and seeing the bush from the elephants' backs was so peaceful and quiet --so unlike the vehicles. Here too we saw leopards --every game drive by vehicle.

Londolozzi was just as we remembered it, and we had a wonderful time. Terrific game viewing and a wonderful guide, Adam, and experienced tracker, Solly. We saw leopard every drive, including a fascinating interaction between mother and grown son. We toured the other camps, but agree that Founders has the most homey atmosphere. Founders does need some refurbishment, however, as the rooms' furnishings were a bit shabby, but I understand that is being planned.

Our lasting memory here was being within 4 feet of a full grown male lion, one of four --all sitting up, alert and staring right at us--but thankfully full! I won't say I was frightened, I have a great deal of confidence in the guides, but it was definitely intimidating!

All in all we had another terrific safari and we appreciate all of your arrangements to make that worry -free. I gave out all of the cards from the back of the Safari Journal (what a great idea!), and I hope you get some calls. By the way, I think you are working with a family, the Winston's, on their safari? They are children/grandchildren of our good friends.

Thanks again for everything. Look forward to contacting you early in 2011 about a 2012 safari, but keep in touch in the meantime and we will do the same.

Best,

**Ronnie Cantor and David Deutsch, Aug 2010**

### **Flying Safari to Chobe in Botswana**

### **Flying Safari to Victoria Falls and Hwange in Zimbabwe**

Dear Kyle (and members of The Africa Adventure Company),

...We had dreamed for years about taking a safari, and the trip exceeded our expectations! Everything went smoothly. I don't know how Wilderness Safaris effortlessly has drivers and tour guides, but they do it beautifully.

We had hoped to see animals--we didn't really have any idea about how many or the variety. We couldn't believe how we could just watch animals in the bush. It was amazing!...Kyle, you had mentioned that we could take basic supplies to the school we visited in Vic Falls, so we took about 100 spiral notebooks in one duffel (about 48 pounds worth) and then another duffel full of toothbrushes, hundreds of pens, pencils, pencil sharpeners, colors, markers, etc. The second day we were at Vic Falls, our lovely guide, Esther, came to get us. We asked if she would like any of the supplies for her grandchildren before we gave them to the school. She replied that she would love to have toothbrushes for her six grandchildren and would be happy to have some school supplies. As she put it, "Now I will have treasures for when my grandchildren come." That kind of makes you reassess your priorities when you hear their school has 1800 primary children, a ratio of 50 students to one teacher, and one computer which is shared between the administrators! We were certainly glad to have included a school in our itinerary in Zimbabwe.

Concerning our stay at the Safari Lodge in Vic Falls, both my husband and I appreciated the five minutes away from town. We were greeted with wash clothes and a cool juice drink. Our balcony faced the waterhole so we enjoyed just looking out at the elephants, cape buffalo, maribou storks, vultures, monkeys, etc. It was very convenient to already have the breakfast and dinner included in our rates. The Boma was touristy, but there was a nice warm environment and we enjoyed trying different meats and even sampled the mopani worms! Drumming and dancing was fun, too. I'm glad we went there. Dining in the hotel restaurant is about the perfect setting, and breakfast buffet is especially good...

Next we were off to Muchenje, which we absolutely loved. We had a driver to the Botswana border, a driver to Kasane, and then Muchenje picked us up at the airport. We were lucky enough to have Lips as our guide, and he was wonderful. The food was excellent, the other guests were warm and interesting. Rod and Kathy and JJ were wonderful managers. The day of our full day safari, we thought we were so fortunate to spot a leopard, have it cross right in front of our vehicle, and settle down not too far from us. When we were driving through the park to go to the Chobe River, we spotted three more leopards together. Lips called our boat and told them we would be a little late because we were watching leopards. (One of the joys of doing things in a

small, small group!) We had a wonderful boat trip, watched hippos, elephants with their young, and saw a huge variety of birds. This was, my husband and I said, one of the best days of our lives!

Also, Lips took us to Mabele School and Mabele Village which was an interesting side trip. He was wonderful at answering our questions since he grew up in this area. One of my most prized momentos is a basket his mother made!

After three days at Muchenje, we went back to Vic Falls. We were heading out at noon to Little Makalolo. Somehow, that flight got cancelled, and we ended up going at 3:30 in the afternoon instead. Without missing a beat, Reason, our Wilderness Safari guide, took us to the Victoria Falls Hotel and we had a complimentary lunch on the terrace overlooking the mist of the falls. Reason arranged for our luggage to be stored until he picked us up at 2:15. The late flight ended up being just great!

Oh my goodness! Little Makalolo is magic, isn't it? We had Charles for a guide, and he was wonderful! Actually, he greeted us wearing an Africa Adventure hat because he had shown Mark Nolting and his family around. We went to the hide to see elephants, spent one whole morning tracking rhinos on foot, and saw so many different animals. Some special moments were seeing a baby giraffe with the umbilical cord still attached, and having sundowners one night while we watched over three hundred buffalo kick up dust on their way to the water hole. Probably the funniest thing that happened was that we were getting ready for sundowners another night. We had heard reports of lions, but did not have much luck. As Charles poured a gin and tonic for the other guest, we saw two lionesses walking down the road. He quickly had everyone back in the vehicle. My husband held the meatballs and dip, I had the wine, and another woman had her G & T. We watched those two lionesses until they disappeared. Then, heading back to Little Mak, we saw another lioness and male lion and they passed right in back of the Land Rover. (We were still holding wine and appetizers!) We watched them until it was dark, then pulled by another water hole and had our drinks. We kidded about that being a moon-upper instead of a sundowner!

We did have a hyena come into camp and eat the leather seat cushion of one of the sofas in the lounge. Then, the last night, one couple had their 31st anniversary and were eating by the pool. Suddenly, they looked up and there was a mother elephant and her baby drinking from the pool. One of the guards went over immediately, and the elephants moved off. Also that night, we had three elephants on the path to our room, so we waited for them to move before a guard took us back. We have so many great memories and the trip was truly something we had been hoping to do for the last several years. Best yet, you listened to what we wanted to do, and this was exactly it! Thank you for working around our free miles to Africa, which probably made the whole trip one we felt we could afford. We felt very safe, things were organized really well, and everyone was kind and friendly. My husband, a wonderful cook, even got a shortbread recipe from our cook at Little Mak.

Coming back to Johannesburg, we had our two Africa Adventure bags and were getting our boarding passes. A gentleman asked if we'd had a good time, and it was Mark Nolting! We got to meet his family and hear about their trip too. How nice of him to take the time to do that. Also, we did very much appreciate the passes to the lounge at Jo Burg. We probably wouldn't have even known about that. Both my husband and I said that planning with your company was definitely the way to go. We had talked about this as being the "trip of our dreams." It certainly was that, but know we're saying, "If we go again, I'd like to....."

Thanks so much for working with us and making the safari just what we'd hoped it would be!

Sincerely,

**Luann and Bill Moth, Aug 2010**

## Flying safari to Matobo Hills/Hwange/Mana Pools/Victoria Falls

Wow! Where do I begin? As you know, we traveled to Zimbabwe to celebrate our 10th wedding anniversary. We have been home for only 10 days, and are already dreaming of going back someday. This truly was the trip of a lifetime and one that we will be talking about for years to come.

Kyle Witten was our safari consultant. He was so patient with me. He really paid attention to the type of adventure that I was looking for and helped me to plan the perfect trip for me and my husband. We began our journey in Johannesburg, South Africa, where we were met by our driver at the airport and taken to a wonderful little hotel about 5 minutes away. The hotel had a chilled bottle of champagne waiting for us in the room for our anniversary which was a very nice surprise. Our driver for the evening was so pleasant to talk to and eager to share stories and facts about Jo'burg and South Africa in general.

We left Jo'burg the next morning for our first camp which was Camp Amalinda in the Matopos Hills. Billy and Priscilla truly have a little piece of heaven. Our only regret was not having more time to just enjoy the camp itself. It is so beautifully designed the way it is built into the rocky outcrop. Our guide at camp was Paul, and he was like a walking encyclopedia. He was a wealth of information and so enthusiastic about everything we saw. We hiked to a cave to see old bushmen paintings, we took a drive through the Matopos Hills where we were lucky enough to get to walk up to 4 white rhinos, and visited a local village and a local children's home. The food was fantastic! The camp staff was so friendly and such a joy to have around. We never wanted for anything and every little detail was taken care of for us. They truly made you feel at home.

Our next camp was Little Makalolo at Hwange. Kim was our host and she was so much fun. Everyone at camp had such a wonderful personality and we truly enjoyed the entire group. We got to know all of the guides while we were there and really enjoyed visiting with all of them at meals and around the campfire at night (Bully, Charles, Sibs and Luis). Our guide was Charles and he was wonderful! He was quite knowledgeable about photography and always did his best to get us on the right side of the animals, in the right light, to help us get the best shots. This was a true benefit that I did not expect.

It's hard to even pick one favorite thing at each camp. But some of our favorite memories might be watching some giraffes that had their eyes on something for about 20 minutes until slowly one at a time, a pride of 6 lions came out of the bush into the open; visiting a local school and having the 6th grade class perform some songs and dances for us; visiting a local village and bringing home curios made by the people we met; stories, music and dancing around the campfire at night; the beautiful, huge herds of elephants with lots of really cute little ones; watching the baboons play; the watering hole often full of animals right in front of our camp; and the food!

They literally fed us every 2 hours and everything was sooooo good. It was also quite exciting having to be walked to our tent each night by a guide with a loaded rifle. Oh, and the noises at night and in the morning. I loved hearing the sounds of the animals. I could truly write several pages about all of the wonderful memories.

Our next camp was Ruckomechi at Mana Pools. All of our camps were decorated so beautifully and each was so comfortable. This last camp was situated on the Zambezi River with an amazing view and had elephants constantly just walking through camp! What an experience. We had to wait on elephants to get to or from our room a few times while we were there. Chris and I cooled off in the pool a few different days surrounded by elephants eating acacia pods and drinking from the Zambezi. Again the staff was wonderful. We had different guides throughout our stay at this camp because of the different activities that we did. We did a walking safari one morning, a canoe ride on the Zambezi, a sunset cruise on the Zambezi, and of course several game drives.

They surprised us with a truly wonderful sundowner the afternoon of the sunset cruise. They had a fire lit on a little beach area in the middle of the Zambezi with snacks and champagne as a surprise for our anniversary.

The food again was amazing. They did a BBQ one night and some of the camp staff performed songs and dances for us which was a real treat.

Oh, I almost forgot, we were welcomed our first day driving into the camp by a Cheetah with her kill sitting right next to the road in the middle of the day. Also, we were lucky enough to see a group of about 25 wild dogs on 2 occasions at Mana Pools. The birds were amazing with brilliant colors, baboons, impala, zebra, wart hogs, sable, kudu, and the hippos! I loved hearing the hippos in the river. And we got to see a baby elephant that our guide said was definitely less than a week old. It could hardly walk yet and was still pink around the ears. Sooooo cute!!

After Mana Pools, we spent one night in Vic Falls. We had a tour of the Falls with our guide Esther (who was a true gem and a wealth of knowledge.....like all of the guides we came across in Zimbabwe). The falls were really beautiful and the rainbows were mesmerizing. I can only imagine what it must be like in the rainy season.

Our whole trip was truly an awesome experience. Our flights, transfers, getting through customs, etc... were all handled so smoothly and efficiently. We never felt as if we were in any danger at any time. And everyone we met was so pleasant and friendly. The Wilderness Camps and staff were top notch, as well as Camp Amalinda and their staff. We were so impressed by the use of solar power and natural resources in all of the camps. The improvements that had been made at the school we visited in Hwange just since 2007 was inspiring.

Zimbabwe definitely holds a special place in our hearts now and we hope to be able to return someday. We took 2000 pictures, so I am still trying to get through them all. I will definitely send over an album of some of our favorites as soon as I can.

Thank you to Kyle and The Africa Adventure Company for helping us to plan the Trip of a Lifetime!!

**Alicia and Chris Putnam, Sep 2010**

### **Private Game Reserves near Kruger**

#### **Visit to Cape Town**

Dear Kyle,

Thank you so much for setting up our trip to South Africa. It was fantastic -- as all the trips you all have planned for us.

Tanda Tula was absolutely the best. Don and Nina Scott along with Dale and Halley (camp managers) have done a spectacular job of reviving this tented camp. The accommodations were like a 5 star hotel. The attention to detail in the 'tents', to the food, to the safari drives was incredible. The family style dining was every elegant and the menu was superb. They also had vegetarian meals for our daughter even though she was the only vegetarian in camp during our stay. The guides and trackers were the best. After arriving and getting settled in, we went on the afternoon game drive and the first thing we saw were the 3 territorial lions feasting on a newly killed cape buffalo. The next day, our morning safari saw these 3 huge lions laying across the trail so full they could hardly move. An incredible sight for these kings of the area. We saw families of elephant, rhino's cheetahs, leopards and herds of Cape buffalo.

The Starry Bed experience of sleeping under the stars was fantastic and we would do it again. I would highly recommend it. We went on our afternoon drive, came back to camp for a delicious dinner. After dinner and the ability to get our belongings together, Dale, our guide, took us out to the "camp" site. I use the word "camp" loosely as it was a small cabin. Tanda Tula had cots, but made up to be a very comfortable bed -- warm and cozy for the winter's evening. They had Amarula liqueur and snacks, a bathroom facility, lanterns all set up for our arrival. The setting is a "blind" they have refurbished and covered to keep the rain out if needed.

It is 2 1/2 stories high and sits on the edge of the major watering hole for the animals in the area. They left their spot light for us so we could look for animals. It was a beautiful evening, the stars and moon were breathtaking. The sunrise was awesome. Dale was our guide and he along with our tracker, Phillip, greeted us at 6am with tea, coffee and rusks before starting our morning safari. The site fit the 5 of us very comfortably. If you get the chance to recommend this in the future -- encourage people to do this -- it was so much fun.

Tanda Tula does a great meal in the evening. Each night two staff members sit with the guests. Their interaction was such a great idea. You get to know the owners, the managers, the guides, along with the office staff that run things behind the scenes. We all had a marvelous time and if given the chance would return here often.

Reluctantly we left and went onto Cape Town. Kensington Place was a beautiful hotel. Although not on the beaten path, they were very happy to always call a taxi and arrange for them to bring us back to the hotel. Again the attention to detail was just incredible. As we arrived around 6pm, they had thoughtfully made reservations at a restaurant for us in case we wanted to eat out. They had tentatively proposed and made reservations for us throughout our stay and were happy to accommodate and change restaurants for us based on our needs. The view of Cape Town and Table Mountain from each room was breath taking. Each evening they had appetizers and drinks ready for their guests. (We were on the second floor and climbed steps. Not sure if they have an elevator to accommodate those that couldn't climb steps.)

Lucia our guide for our time in Cape Town was the best. She was so willing and open to do whatever we wanted and made suggestions based on our schedule and weather conditions. We fit in everything we wanted to do. Our "free" day that we had left, was the calmest day for the seas, so we went whale watching. Lucia arranged all this for us.

At Pierre Jordan winery, she coaxed the owner into opening a bottle of sparkling wine with a saber == which is usually only done on formal tours. She was so open and warm, knowledgeable. I would highly recommend her again.

As we go through our photos we'll send some along especially of the Starry Bed experience.

Again thank you so much. As always, you all plan a spectacular trip -- down to the last detail. We are so grateful to you for making our trip to South Africa a n unforgettable experience. All five of us again, left our hearts in Africa.

**Kathy, Bill, Kristine, Will and Katie Rose , Jul-Aug 2010**

### **Flying Safari to the Okavango Delta and Selinda Reserve Shared Mobile Tented Safari to Moremi and the Khwai Concession**

Dear Mark,

Thank you, to you and your staff at The Africa Adventure Company, for making our recent trip to Botswana (May 25th through June 13th) such a big success! It was truly a wonderful adventure--we saw everything that we had hoped to see (and much more), our guides were outstanding, and the lodges and our tented camping worked out just great. Many of the wildlife viewings that we experienced were our best of any trip.

Despite the threat of strikes by the British Airways cabin crews, all of our four long-distance flights--both outbound and return--went smoothly and were on schedule. Within Botswana, it was quite exceptional to have so much high water, and this was a factor that the lodges and guides had to contend with at all locations we visited. For example, for getting to our first camp, Vumbura Plains, we had to be helicoptered in from Duma Hills Camp.

Vumbura Plains Camp was a wonderfully-beautiful setting, with great accommodations set along the length of the wetland. It was quite a surprise to see the quality of the rooms there. Game drives at Vumbura had to contend with quite deep water levels at times. Our camp guide, Obi (who we found out was the head guide) often had to open the door of his vehicle to let the water drain out. At Vumbura we saw everything: lions walking through water, great elephants, leopards, wild dogs, cheetah.

After Vumbura, we helicoptered out to Mombo Camp, then flew to Xachanacha in the Moremi area where we met our professional guide, Nic Polenakis for our six days of mobile tented camping. Nic was just outstanding throughout our time together. Early our first morning with Nic, he put us in position to witness a pride of nine lions (two big males and seven lionesses) take down a cape buffalo right in front of our vehicle! Needless to say, we spent a number of hours observing and listening to this rare spectacle as it unfolded through the morning. I know it was challenging for Nic to navigate the many flooded roads (and to bypass other roads that were closed) in both the Moremi and Khwai Concession areas, but he did manage it all somehow so that the difficulties were hardly apparent. We did a wonderful game walk one morning. The tented camps were a great experience, once again. We had a great time together....thank you Nic!

Flying on to Selinda Camp, we had more good experiences--both enjoying the beautiful lodge and accommodations, dining out under the stars each night, and great game drives with another very good camp guide (Mots). Here, too, we saw everything--great elephant, several up-close viewings of a pair of cheetah brothers, a lioness with two young cubs, wonderful giraffe, wonderful male lions (calling each night). It was very interesting to learn about Derek and Beverly Joubert at Selinda Camp, their passion for African wildlife, and to see Beverly's beautiful photographs.

In all, we saw about 160 bird species during our two weeks in Botswana.

Best regards,

**Gary Smith/Kathleen Kemper, May-Jun 2010**

**Flying safari to a Private Game Reserve near Kruger**

**Visit to Victoria Falls**

**Flying safari to Okavango Delta and Chobe**

Dear Alison,

I wanted to send you an e-mail to let you know that Alan and I have both returned home after an amazing trip to Djuma, Victoria Falls, Muchenje, and Jao. I have been awake in bed since 4 AM, hopelessly jetlagged and wishing that I were instead still looking out over the Okavango Delta from the deck hammock at Jao.

We both had an amazing vacation, and I wanted to thank you for organizing such a flawless trip. I have traveled a fair bit in other parts of Africa, and I have found that delays, cancellations and other mishaps are often unavoidable. Alan and I were amazed by how well this trip was arranged; all the moving pieces (road transfers, chartered flights, inter-country flights, etc) were seamless and 100% stress-free. The combination of Sabi Sands, Chobe, and the delta also provided us with fantastic variety. We saw an incredible variety of animals at Djuma Bush Lodge (rhinos, leopards, lions, etc), and at Chobe, we enjoyed the large numbers of elephants, hippos, and giraffes as well as our boat ride on the Chobe River. Although we saw fewer animals at Jao because of the high water levels, it was a perfect way to end our safari.

We really were impressed with the staff at Djuma Bush Lodge (now called "Cheetah Plains"). Also, the staff at Jao were AMAZING, and Alan and I both really loved our guide, Cruise. He was knowledgeable, mellow, and had a terrific sense of humor. He really was fantastic, and I would highly recommend him to other visitors to Jao. The Jao lodge was gorgeous and felt a bit indulgent, but we loved it! Unfortunately, however, it may have spoiled us a bit for future travel. We were both glad that our trip concluded in Jao rather than started there.

I know I expressed concern about safety issues in Zimbabwe during our initial planning discussions, and I wanted to let you know that Alan and I felt very safe in Victoria Falls. The folks we met there were perhaps some of the most helpful and friendly that we met during our travels.

I also wanted to let you know, in case you have other same-sex couples booking travel to this part of the world, that both Alan and I felt totally comfortable throughout the trip. The staff at all of these places were professional, and neither of us ever felt uncomfortable.

Again, thank you for your help and support planning our safari.

Best,

**Jonathan Volk & Alan Le, May-Jun 2010**

### **Safari in Botswana to Okavango Delta and Selinda**

### **Safari in Zimbabwe to Mana Pools**

### **Visit to Victoria Falls and Cape Town**

Hello,

Just emailing to report on our recent trip to Botswana, Zimbabwe and Cape Town. Thank you all for your help in booking and choosing the places we visited. We had a marvelous time and really loved it all. The highlight was our time in Botswana at both Selinda and Vumbura, and getting to know our guide, Brooks, what a lovely man.

We also had a wonderful time in the Mana Pools at Vundu with Nick and Desiree. What a surprise to run into Mark and Alison Nolting upon arriving! We really loved Nick's adventurous style and saw the animals in a new light when approaching them on foot. Great fun was had by all.

Vic Falls and Cape Town were both nice, but in our experience, paled in comparison to our times in the bush. Having said that, our guides in both places, Esther and Andrew Brinks, were both superb.

The weather in Cape Town was not conducive to shark diving, which was a disappointment. We did manage a whale watch on our last day though. Also really loved the Cape Grace, service was excellent...

Really loved the trip! ...we are definitely planning another trip soon.

Thanks to all,

**Jill Wattles, Jul 2010**