PAFURI COLLECTION
BY RETURN AFRICA

BAOBAB
Hill House

A WILD SANCTUARY
where soul & safari meet

Deep within the Makuleke Contract Park, the most biodiverse corner of Kruger, lies Pafuri, a collection of experiences by RETURN Africa that invite you to RETURN to something deeper: silence, connection, and the rhythms of an ancient wilderness.

Far from the crowds, this is where Africa reveals its raw, untouched beauty: towering baobabs, luminous fever tree forests, sweeping floodplains, and the living pulse of the bush.

Though it covers just 1% of Kruger, Pafuri holds over 75% of the park's biodiversity. From elephants, nyala, and great herds of buffalo to elusive leopards, wild dogs, and Pel's fishing owl, every walk, drive, and river view brims with possibility. For birders, photographers, and nature lovers, it is a rare kind of heaven, one where nature still sets the pace.

Our safaris are unhurried. Rather than chase from sighting to sighting, we linger, listen, and allow the bush to reveal itself. Magnificent places, predators, herds, and moments of wonder emerge naturally when given time. We respect the wildlife that roams freely across open frontiers, and we honour the ancestors whose traces remain in this land since the dawn of time. We know we too are only passing through, with a duty to care for the life it sustains.

Pafuri is more than a safari. It is a pioneering conservation partnership with the Makuleke people, who own this land and guide its future. Your visit supports jobs, education, and the protection of this remarkable ecosystem. Whether you come to walk, to learn, or simply to exhale and listen, Pafuri offers something rare: a sense of coming home. No wonder guests leave asking, "When can we come back?"

RETURN *Africa*

Pafuri Collection

Makuleke Contract Park, Kruger National Park

Pafuri Camp
Hutwini Walking Camp
Nkula Walking Camp
Baobab Hill House

Cape Collection

Cape Town

Welgelegen House
An African Story

PAFURI *Collection*

BAOBAB *Hill House*

Baobab Hill House is the ultimate retreat for those seeking exclusivity and tranquillity. Perched on a ridge north of the Luvuvhu River and shaded by majestic baobabs, this intimate four-bedroom home offers a serene escape steeped in history. Once the Pafuri section ranger's station, it has been transformed into a getaway that blends heritage with comfort.

The house features a fully equipped kitchen, dining room, and lounge with ample space to relax and gather with loved ones. Its signature veranda, evokes the romance of classic safaris, perfect for long afternoons, sundowners, and stargazing. Guests also enjoy access to a private guide and open safari vehicle for game drives or walking excursions (by prior arrangement). Baobab Hill House is available on both self-catering and fully catered bases, providing flexibility and peace of mind.

LOCALITY *Plan*

Please note: layout is indicative. Not to scale.

What to EXPECT

- The highest biodiversity of any region in Greater Kruger National Park
- The best South African walking safaris
- Extraordinary scenery including Lanner Gorge, the Fever Tree forest, Ramsar Wetlands, Mountains and Baobabs
- 450 species of birds, making it the premier birding hot-spot in the country
- A historical and cultural richness, including the ancient citadel of Thulamela and the Makuleke story
- Crooks corner and the Limpopo river, where three countries meet

House FACILITIES

Number of Rooms:	4, maximum 8 guests
Children:	All ages
WiFi:	Yes
Check-in & Check-out:	14:00 & 11:00 (at Pafuri Camp)
Number of Bathrooms:	4 (3 en suite & 1 shared)
Dining Room:	Yes
Kitchen:	Yes, fully equiped
House Communication:	Radio
Fire Pit:	Yes
Solar Powered:	Yes
Swimming Pool:	Yes
Electricity:	220v (Plug Types C, D, M, N, USB)
Fenced:	No

ACTIVITIES

Game drives in open safari vehicles.

Game walks with experienced guides, subject to arrangement before arrival.

INCLUSIONS

- Accommodation
- All meals*
- Selected Beverages*
- Tea/Coffee
- Two activities daily
- Camp hand
- Kitchen assistant
- Housekeeping

*Catered package

EXCLUSIONS

- Flights/Transfer costs (unless otherwise stated)
- SANParks entrance fee
- Premium beverages
- Gratuities
- Cultural tours

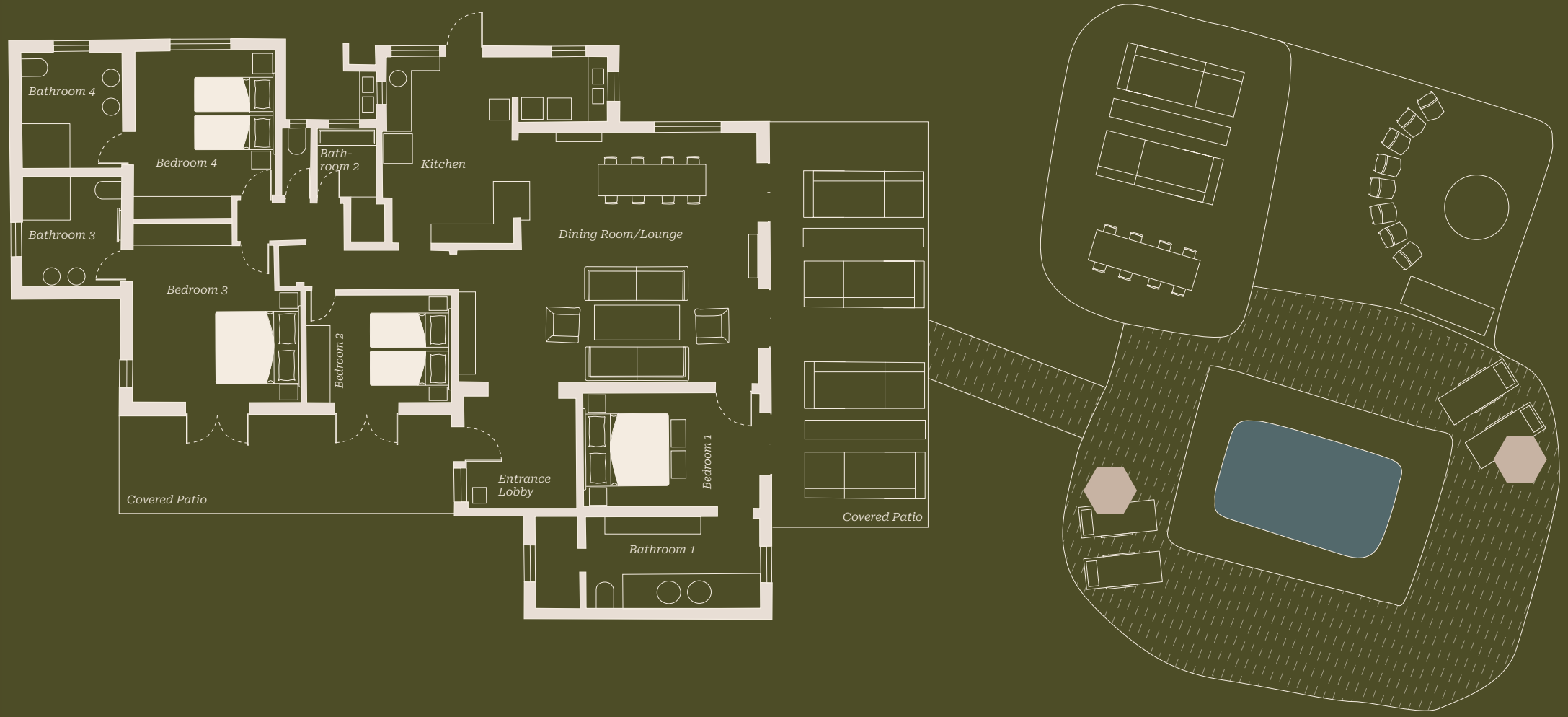
Room FACILITIES

Standard Beds:	Double or Twin
In-room safe:	Yes
Extra Beds:	No, cot available on request
Aircon:	Yes
Mosquito Nets:	Yes
Fans:	Yes
Indoor Showers:	Yes
Bath:	Yes
Hair Dryer:	No (due to solar power)
Tea & Coffee Station:	Yes
Laundry:	Yes (included)

EXTRA INFORMATION

Rainfall	Most rain falls from November to March
Birding	Best between November & March
Season	Open all year round
Malaria	Moderate malaria area

HOUSE *Layout*



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THE ELUSIVE
Pel's fishing owl

Pafuri remains one of the best destinations in South Africa to witness the Pel's Fishing Owl. It inhabits the riverine forests along the banks of the Luvuvhu river and fishes at night from fallen logs in the shallows.

Many guests have been fortunate enough to see the owls from Pafuri Camp's main decks, but they also frequent other favoured fishing spots along the course of the river, and can sometimes be seen at dusk and dawn flying to or from their roosts. A sighting of this rare and elusive bird feels like a magical encounter, one that will never be forgotten.

The Pel's Fishing Owl is one of the few species of owl that specialise in catching fish. They hunt primarily at night, using their exceptional night vision to spot fish and other aquatic prey. With powerful talons adapted to grip slippery fish this majestic bird silently swoops down to pounce on its meal, making it a skilful and fascinating nocturnal hunter.

Pel's Fishing Owls are found in well wooded flood plains and riverine forests in sub-Saharan Africa. They are rare and sensitive, and prefer wild and remote areas like Pafuri. Even in Pafuri they remain elusive because they are active only at night and rest during the day in large densely branched trees. The owl's distinctive low deep hoots, or the juveniles' eerie cat-like wails echo through the night and can often be heard from the tents at Pafuri.

DIVERSE *wildlife*

Our 26,500-hectare concession in northern Kruger is a living tapestry, ever-shifting with the seasons. Though it covers just 1% of Kruger National Park, Pafuri holds an astonishing 75% of its biodiversity, making it one of the richest corners of this wildness.

Along the rivers, hippos wallow in pods, crocodiles drift silently, and birdlife gathers in extraordinary numbers. The valleys shelter the Kruger park's highest densities of nyala and eland, while great herds of elephant and buffalo move through when the land calls them.

Morning safaris pulse with life, impala, kudu, zebra, wildebeest, baboons, warthogs and more, while rare sightings like Sharpe's grysbok or the yellow-spotted rock hyrax feel almost commonplace here.

At night, a different world stirs: leopard and hyena, honey badger and bushpig, civet, genet, and the elusive African wild cat.

And sometimes, lion, cheetah or wild dog pass through, a reminder that in Pafuri, anything is possible.

RETURN
AFRICA

RETURN
Africa's Impact

At Pafuri, RETURN Africa's impact is woven into every moment, from the quiet presence of local guides to the restoration of ancient wildlife corridors. In partnership with Makuleke leadership, RETURN Africa supports conservation, employment, and cultural heritage in one of South Africa's most biodiverse landscapes. Every stay contributes to long-term stewardship and community-led protection of this extraordinary place.

Read our full impact story at returnafrica.com

THE BAOBABS
Of Pafuri

Baobab trees majestically dot the landscape in Pafuri, standing as timeless sentinels of nature's grandeur and resilience. Their ancient presence and towering beauty inspire a profound sense of wonder and connection to the land, inviting all who behold them to marvel at the enduring spirit of the natural world.

Baobab trees are often called "upside-down trees" because of their unique appearance, but they are also known as "trees of life" due to their enormous capacity to store water. Their thick, trunk-like stems can hold thousands of litres of water, which is crucial for survival in the arid regions of Africa where they predominantly grow. During the dry season, this stored water is essential for both the tree and the local wildlife, providing a vital resource when other water sources are scarce.

Baobab trees are some of the oldest living organisms on Earth. Many baobabs are estimated to be over 1,000 years old, with some even reaching an astonishing age of over 3,000 years. These ancient giants have witnessed countless generations and have become central to many African myths and legends. Their longevity is attributed to their resilience and ability to regenerate bark, making them symbols of endurance and timelessness in the natural world.

EXPLORE, WALK
and wonder at Pafuri

At the Pafuri Collection, every moment is an invitation to explore, reflect, and connect with a land of extraordinary diversity.

Walk the ancient paths of Thulamela, where stone ruins whisper stories of human history, or wander beneath the luminous canopy of fever tree forests, alive with birdlife and the gentle rhythm of the bush.

Step off the beaten track with guided walking safaris, where footprints and stories alike trace the lives of both people and wildlife.

Stand at Crooks Corner, where three countries meet along the meandering rivers, and feel the vastness of this borderless wilderness.

From intimate birding excursions to immersive cultural tours, Pafuri offers experiences that awaken the senses and deepen your connection to this remarkable corner of Kruger.

THE APEX PREDATOR, *the Spotted Hyena*

Often misunderstood as mere scavengers, spotted hyenas are actually skilled hunters, capable of bringing down large prey such as wildebeest and zebras.

Their powerful jaws and digestive systems allow them to consume almost every part of their prey, includingbones, making them one of nature's most efficient recyclers. This dual role as both hunter and scavenger plays a crucial part in maintaining the ecological balance by keepingpopulations in check and cleaning up carcasses from the environment.

Spotted hyenas in Pafuri live in large, complex social groups called clans. These clans are female-dominated, with a strict hierarchy led by a dominant female. The social structure is highly organised, with females usually being larger and more aggressive than males,ensuring their dominance within the group.

In Makuleke culture, the spotted hyena holds significant spiritual and symbolic meanings. The Makuleke people, like many indigenous Africancommunities, often view hyenas with a mix of respect, fear, and reverence. Hyenas are frequently featured in folklore and stories,where they are depicted as cunning and intelligent creatures. In some tales, they are seen as tricksters or symbols of transformation, reflecting their scavenging behaviour and ability to survive in harshconditions. The Makuleke's spiritual beliefs include the notion that hyenas possess supernatural powers, and encountering one is oftenconsidered a message from the ancestors.

RETURN to what matters

Getting to **PAFURI**

PAFURI CAMP is situated in the Makuleke Contractual Park in the far north of the Kruger National Park.

GPS Co-ordinates: 22°25'15.81"S / 31°13'45.81"E

SELF DRIVE

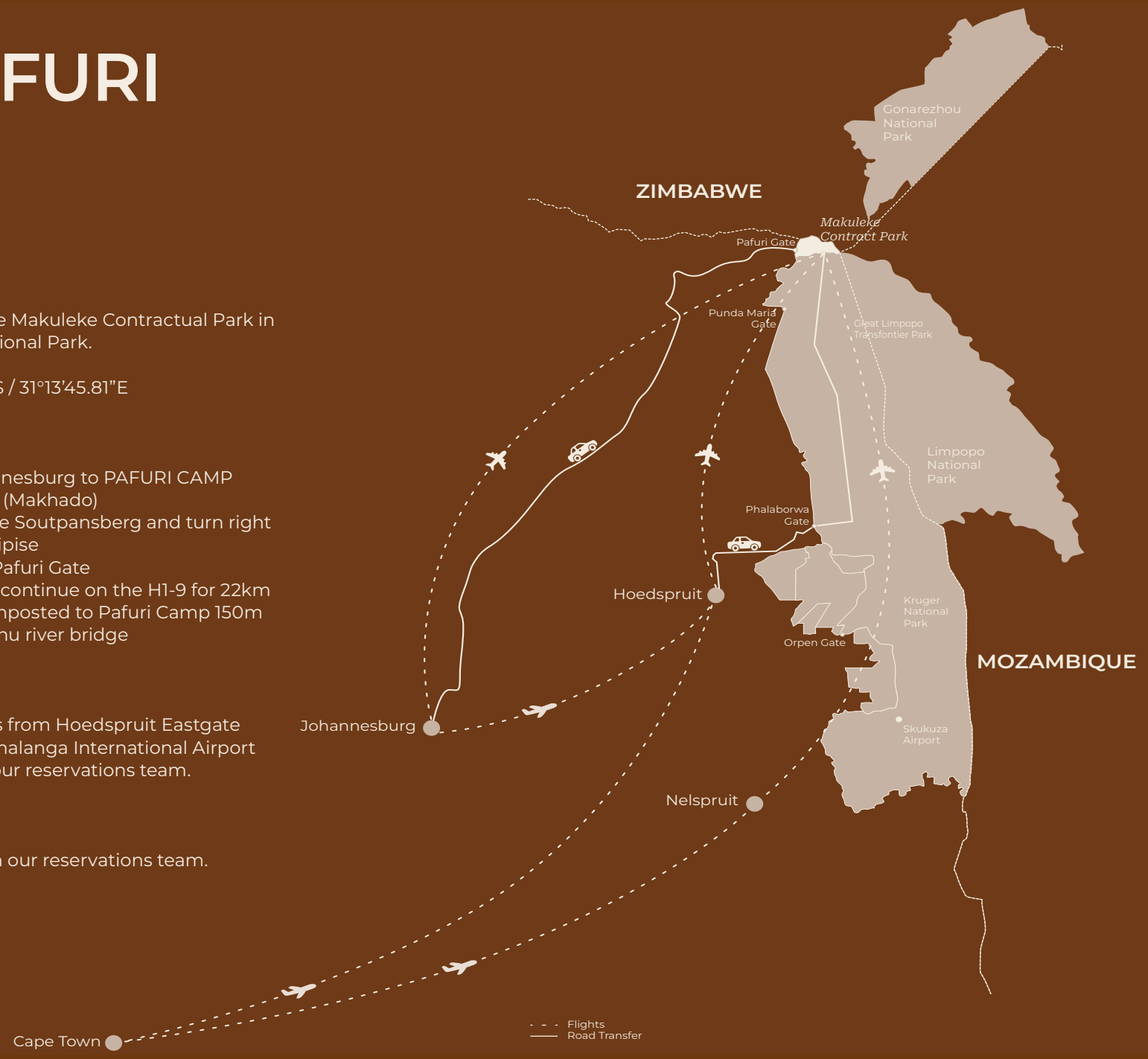
- 640km / 7HO0 from Johannesburg to PAFURI CAMP
- N1 North to Louis Trichardt (Makhado)
- Continue on the N1 over the Soutpansberg and turn right
- onto the R525 towards Tshipise
- Continue past Tshipise to Pafuri Gate
- Enter the Kruger Park and continue on the H1-9 for 22km
- Look out for a left turn, signposted to Pafuri Camp 150m before reaching the Luvuvhu river bridge

FLIGHTS

RETURN Africa operates flights from Hoedspruit Eastgate Airport as well as Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport (KMIA). Enquire for rates with our reservations team.

ROAD TRANSFERS

Transfers can be arranged with our reservations team.



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Book Now

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