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Getting to Machangulo

Once you arrive at the Futi gate, which is the main entrance gate to the Maputo Special Reserve (Elephant Reserve), stop at the parking area and pay the entrance fee at the office.

Please keep this receipt as you'll be asked to show it when entering the Machangulo Reserve as well as presenting it again at the gate when exiting the park.

From the Futi Gate entrance, you will be driving along sand roads all the way to the villas, so be sure that you have a capable off-road vehicle and that your tires are a bit deflated so that it's easier to drive on the soft sand - and to prevent the roads from deteriorating.

There are many paths branching off from the main road and although they mostly join up with the same road again, keep to the main road as much as possible:

- Follow the sand road for 14,8 kilometres where the first major turn-off is at the first lake.

  *Note: At Route Marker 2, follow the road to the right, as the left road leads to a dead-end.

- At 5,5km from the gate, the road forks to the left with no marker, but keep to the right. If you drive across a dry floodplain, you are on the right path.

- After the floodplain, the road will curve south along the power lines, keep following it.

- At Route Marker 4, keep left (east), following the power lines.



- At Route Marker 5, keep going straight still following the power lines. Along the route, you'll pass the first big lake.



- At Route Marker 6, turn left close to the edge of the lake, heading north. The road will curve back east before curving north again to follow the power lines again.



*Note: You will drive along another floodplain, where you will be very likely to see elephants roaming. Do not try and approach them as they tend to get aggressive when too close, and veering off the path will likely result in you getting stuck.



- Approximately 5km's from Route Marker 6, you'll find Route Marker 8. Keep left here, still following the power lines.



- Route Marker 10 is not clearly visible from the road but keep going straight (north).

- Approximately 14,5km from the first lake, you'll reach the second lake.

- At Route Marker 12, keep left.



- At Route Marker 13, keep going straight (north) still following the power lines.



- 20,6 km from the first lake, just after the 'boom' gate (unmanned), keep left at the sign, towards Santa Maria.





- 23,8km from the first lake, there is a gate into the Machangulo Reserve. Here you have to present your receipt that you received when first entering at the Futi Gate.



- Keep left at the Machangulo SA sign a couple kilometres from the gate.

- At the 2nd Machangulo SA sign, turn right (east), away from the power lines.



- At the 3rd Machangulo SA sign, keep following the arrow.



- At the 4th Machangulo SA sign, follow it to the right.



- At the 5th Machangulo SA sign, turn left.



- At the 6th Machangulo SA sign, turn right.



- At the 7th Machangulo SA sign, turn left.



- There is a second gate into Machangulo Reserve. Occasionally here they check your receipt again. You will start noticing blue poles (road markers). Keep straight and follow these blue poles. These blue poles mark the "Beach Road" along which all the villas are situated on the east coast of the Machangulo Peninsula. The red poles lead to Santa Maria village, which is on the west coast of the peninsula.



- 500m from the second Machangulo gate, the road splits. Keep left (right goes towards Mucombo).



- Keep following the blue poles. You will also start noticing stand numbers.



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- Loggerhead Beach Villa is stand number 38.
- The Monarch Villa is stand number 46.
- Kilima Sanctuary is stand number 48.
- Leatherback Beach Villa is stand number 56.
- Approximately 1 kilometer from the second Machangulo gate, you'll come to another small lake. Take the right fork (east).
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- 100 meter after the small lake, there is another fork, keep right.



- 1,2km from the small lake, there is yet another fork. Turn left (north).



- Approximately 6,8km from the Machangulo SA gate, you will find the Machangulo airstrip on your left. Keep going straight past it.

- Loggerhead Beach Villa is 12,2km from the Machangulo gate, on your right.

- The Monarch Villa is on your right, 14,3km from the Machangulo gate. The driveway is about a kilometer long, so just keep going. Almost there!

- From The Monarch, it is 500m to Kilima Sanctuary.

- To get to Leatherback Beach Villa, once you've passed Kilima Sanctuary, drive another 2 km and then turn right at the fork.

- Follow the sand track for about 400m and then take the left fork.

- Drive another 200m and turn right at the fork.

- Another 300 meters up a hill, and then you're at your destination.

WHEN DRIVING IN MACHANGULO, PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- There are no restrooms along the route. Please make use of the restrooms at Futi Gate, as the next stop is at the villas.

- Be mindful of other drivers. There are sections, indicated by arrows, that are one-way, but for the most part, the roads are all two way. There are sections along the road where you can pull off to let others pass.

- As it is part of a nature reserve, there are many animals along the route. Please be mindful not to speed. Not only does this cause the potential to drive into oncoming traffic, but you might hit an animal along the way.

- Dung beetles always have right of way as they are a protected species and vital to the ecology. When you see a dung beetle in the road, please carefully drive around them. If that's not possible, stop, and carefully remove them with their load from the road before continuing.

- On national roads, the speed limit is average of 120km an hour, but from Maputo to the Special Reserve, the road passes many villages where the speed limit is between 60 and 80km an hour. There are many speed traps along the route, so be mindful of the speed limit, and be careful of animals and people crossing the road. The speed limit in the park is max 30km an hour, but it is advisable to stick to 20km or less.

- When arriving at Futi Gate, lower your tire pressure to max 1,5 bar. Hard tires don't work in the soft sand roads and it also wears out the roads making it more difficult for others to drive on the road.

- Changing gear while going uphill will make holes in the road. Should you lose speed or traction going uphill on soft sand, it is better to reverse and start over from the bottom of the hill in a lower gear. For deep sand and steep hills, switch to low range.

- Items to have in your car:
    - Tyre gauge
    - Shovel
    - Towing strap/rope
    - Drinking water
    - Extra fan belt (not crucial but beneficial when needed)
    - Jumper cables
    - Wheel spanner
    - Compressor, if possible. Although there is one at Futi Gate, it is not always operational. When exiting the park, there is a Total Garage a short distance from the gate on the way back to Maputo where you can pump your tires again.

- It is advisable to fill up your vehicle at the last available filling station. Fuel is available in Santa Maria on weekdays from 8am to 4pm, but don't expect comparative pricing or guarantee of availability or quality.

- In low light, even when not dark yet, it is advisable to drive with your lights on as this increases visibility and ensures other vehicles can see you from a distance to avoid collisions.

- *In general, if you are not confident driving off-road, let us rather assist you with driving or arrange a driver for you. Always be mindful of other road users and keep an eye out for other cars, wildlife and pedestrians. And please…don't litter.*

Getting to Santa Maria from The Monarch:

From the Monarch, turn right (north) on Beach Road, and follow the road for 2,6km where you'll come to a fork. Keep to the left of the fork.

At 4,9km from the Monarch, take the fork to the right and then right again. You'll notice a water pump here - remember this pump as a landmark, as coming back, this is where you'll have to turn to get back to the villas.

After you pass the water pump, you'll be driving through the outskirts of Santa Maria and notice various houses and small shops - and lots of livestock and people in the road. You'll pass a soccer pitch on the left and shortly after that Echo Ocean dive centre on your right.

About 120m pass the dive centre, follow the arrow to the right towards Bemugi's Place, and then shortly after turn left. Bemugi's Place will be on your left, and carrying on pass Bemugi's, towards the right will lead to Santa Maria beach, where you'll find a beach bar, local curios, and this is also where the boats to Maputo, or day trips to Inhaca Island, depart from.

In case of emergency please feel free to contact: Antonio Munguambe, +258 84 488 4733.