

Lake, beach and bush

Activities & experiences

Everything here centres on the diversity of the wetlands of Lake St Lucia, Africa's largest estuarine system: a full day by boat on the Narrows, a full day on the beach of the Eastern Shores, and in between, wetland nature drives, silent eco-boats, birding, and evenings around the fire.

How our activities work

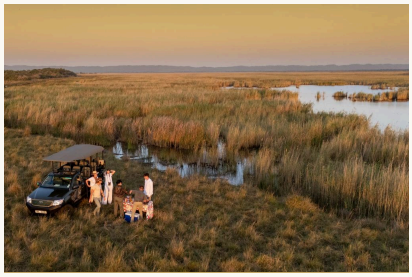
Our scheduled activities are included on the **Fully Inclusive** rate, and on the **SADC** rate without drinks or the Hluhluwe–iMfolozi day trip.

Drive times shift between summer and winter. Every activity is weather permitting; in high winds or unsafe conditions we offer an alternative where we can.

The activity itinerary below shows what we offer on a 4-night stay, where 3 full days are available to experience our unique activities.









Day 1 · Day of arrival

Wetland nature drives — Western Shores

Morning and afternoon, our open safari vehicles explore the wetlands of the Western Shores, rich in birdlife and in game large and small. Four of the Big Five are found in this part of the park: elephant, buffalo, rhino and leopard. There is no lion. The afternoon drive stops for a sundowner as the light goes.

Afternoon drive	Departs 15h30 in winter / 16h00 in summer — about 3 hours, with a sundowner stop
Morning drive	Departs 05h30 in summer / 06h00 in winter, back by 08h00 — about 2 to 2½ hours
Vehicle	Our open safari vehicles.
Price	Included in Fully Inclusive
Need to know	On a 1-night stay we offer an afternoon wetland nature drive on arrival and a morning wetland nature drive (or eco-boat, weather permitting and subject to the availability of a guide) before departure.









Day 2

Full-day boat safari – the Narrows

Our signature day. After breakfast a wetland nature drive takes guests through the Western Shores to the boat pick-up point, where the skipper is waiting. Then comes a leisurely 2-hour cruise on the Narrows of Lake St Lucia, Africa's largest estuarine system, with crocodile, a great many hippo and the birdlife the lake is known for.

When	Departs 09h00, returns 14h30–15h00
How long	About 6 hours, with a 2-hour boat cruise
Boat	Our 12-seater barge boat, reached by open safari vehicle
Included	Picnic lunch in the park
Price	Included in Fully Inclusive
Need to know	Full-day safaris need a stay of 2 nights or more and are not run on arrival or departure days (A 2-night stay includes 1 full-day safari — the boat safari, or the beach safari if requested in advance. Recommend a 3-night stay to do both full-day safaris).









Day 3

Full-day beach safari – Eastern Shores

After breakfast guests cross Lake St Lucia by boat and are met on the Eastern Shores by your guide. The day belongs to the Indian Ocean coastline of the Eastern Shores: swimming, snorkelling and a picnic lunch on an empty beach, then a nature drive back across the Eastern and Western Shores, in time for high tea at the lodge.

When	Departs 08h30, returns about 15h00–15h30
How long	About 6–7 hours
Boat and vehicle	Our 8-seater boat to cross the lake, then your guide takes you to the beach in the open safari vehicle
Included	Picnic lunch
Price	Included in Fully Inclusive
Need to know	Full-day safaris need a stay of 2 nights or more and are not run on arrival or departure days (A 2-night stay includes 1 full-day safari — the boat safari, or the beach safari if requested in advance. Recommend a 3-night stay to do both full-day safaris).





Day 4

Sunrise or sunset eco-boat (weather permitting), or morning wetland nature drive

Our 2 solar-powered, battery-operated eco-boats leave from the bay in front of the lodge in the early morning or late afternoon. They are near-silent, which is the point: the hippo and the birds carry on as though nothing has arrived. An eco-boat can take the place of a morning or afternoon wetland nature drive when conditions allow; otherwise the morning is a wetland nature drive on the Western Shores.

When	Early morning or late afternoon, from the bay in front of the lodge
Boat	2 solar eco-boats, 4 guests each
Price	Included in Fully Inclusive
Need to know	Offered in place of a drive when conditions allow (weather permitting and subject to the availability of a guide).

Night drive – Western Shores

In place of the afternoon drive, the night drive goes out after an early dinner to look for hippo out of the water, genet, civet, serval, owls, nightjars, pythons, porcupines and hyena. In January and February the guides look for baby flap-necked chameleons; in winter, for fireflies.

When	19h00 to 21h00, after an early dinner at about 18h00
Price	Included in Fully Inclusive
Need to know	Booked in advance, subject to guide availability and the weather, at management's discretion.

On request · 4-night stays

Hluhluwe–iMfolozi day trip

Offered on a 4-night stay, on request: an early start for the drive to Africa's oldest proclaimed nature reserve, a picnic brunch and a morning looking for the Big Five, then back to the lodge for a light lunch. It is a lovely addition to a 4-night stay, but the heart of Makakatana is the water.

When	Departs 05h00, returns 14h00
How long	1h30 each way on public roads to get there, with the morning in the reserve
Included	Picnic brunch
Price	Included in Fully Inclusive
Need to know	Pre-booked in advance; offered on a 4-night stay on request.





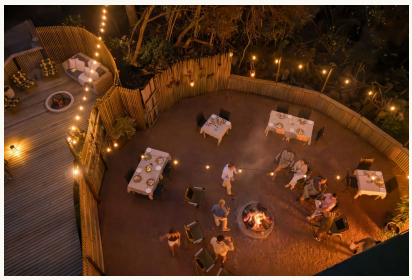


Birding morning and bush breakfast (optional)

An early start with a guide in the wetlands, a bush breakfast, and back at the lodge by 11h00. The lake and its surrounds are among the finest birding in South Africa, and a morning spent looking for them is one of the quiet pleasures of a stay here.

When	An early start, back at the lodge by 11h00
Included	A bush breakfast (or return to the lodge for brunch)
Price	Included in Fully Inclusive
Need to know	Booked in advance, subject to guide availability.







Evenings

Evenings are unhurried. After the afternoon drive guests gather around the fire at the smaller boma on the deck, then move to the main boma, rebuilt in 2026, for dinner. Private dinners can be set on the new deck at the water's edge, and the Old Crab House — the 1930s cold store Jock Morrison built to pack lake crabs for the Durban train, now wrapped in a strangler fig — is a private dining space for two, on request.

Activities at a glance

Included on Fully Inclusive, and on SADC without drinks or the Hluhluwe–iMfolozi day trip.

Activity	When
Afternoon wetland nature drive	Departs 15h30 in winter / 16h00 in summer
Morning wetland nature drive	Departs 05h30 in summer / 06h00 in winter, back by 08h00
Night drive — Western Shores	19h00 to 21h00, after an early dinner at about 18h00
Sunrise or sunset eco-boat — Makakatana Bay	Early morning or late afternoon, from the bay in front of the lodge
Full-day boat safari — the Narrows	Departs 09h00, returns 14h30–15h00; includes picnic lunch in the park
Full-day beach safari — Eastern Shores	Departs 08h30, returns about 15h00–15h30; includes picnic lunch
Hluhluwe–iMfolozi day trip	Departs 05h00, returns 14h00; includes picnic brunch; 1h30 each way on public roads
Birding morning and bush breakfast (optional)	An early start, back at the lodge by 11h00; includes a bush breakfast (or return to the lodge for brunch)

Short stays

Full-day safaris need a stay of 2 nights or more (where a full day is available) and are not run on arrival or departure days. On a 1-night stay we offer an afternoon wetland nature drive on arrival and a morning wetland nature drive (or eco-boat, weather permitting and subject to the availability of a guide) before departure.

A 2-night stay includes 1 full-day safari — the boat safari, or the beach safari if requested in advance.

Recommend a 3-night stay to do both full-day safaris.

Longer stays allow guests to experience our other activities, and a deeper experience of the park.

Booked with outside operators

- Birding, whale watching, horse riding and deep-sea fishing can be booked directly with outside operators, at their prices.
- Transfers for these are not included.
- Whale season runs June – November.

In-room massage by appointment, subject to therapist availability, at extra cost. The treatment menu is shown at check-in.