



# MADIKWE GAME RESERVE

## ABOUT THIS FACT SHEET:

This fact sheet is a resource produced by Madikwe Safari Lodge. For details on the lodge itself – its three camps, private villa, and full guest offering – please refer to the comprehensive Madikwe Safari Lodge fact sheet.

Madikwe Game Reserve is one of South Africa's largest and most distinctive Big Five reserves – a **malaria-free** wilderness covering approximately 76,000 hectares in the country's North West Province, on the border with Botswana. The reserve sits within a **unique ecological transition zone** where the Kalahari and bushveld biomes meet, supporting a varied landscape, a rich wildlife mix, and a notably calm, uncrowded safari experience.

Ecologically diverse, conservation-led, and exceptionally well-suited to a wide range of travellers, Madikwe is home to the **Madikwe Safari Lodge** collection – three distinct safari camps and one private villa under a single family brand.

This fact sheet equips our partners with the practical information needed to position and sell Madikwe Game Reserve with confidence – including how it differs from other South African reserves, who it suits, and how it combines within wider itineraries.

## 1.1 MADIKWE GAME RESERVE AT A GLANCE

LOCATION	North West Province, South Africa – on the Botswana border
SIZE	Approximately 76,000 hectares (188,000 acres)
RESERVE TYPE	Big Five game reserve, community-owned conservation model
MALARIA STATUS	Malaria-free
WILDLIFE	Big Five + African wild dog, cheetah, brown hyena, spotted hyena
BEST TIME TO VISIT	Year-round – non-migratory wildlife and a semi-arid climate
CLOSEST GATEWAY	Johannesburg (OR Tambo) – ~1 hour by air

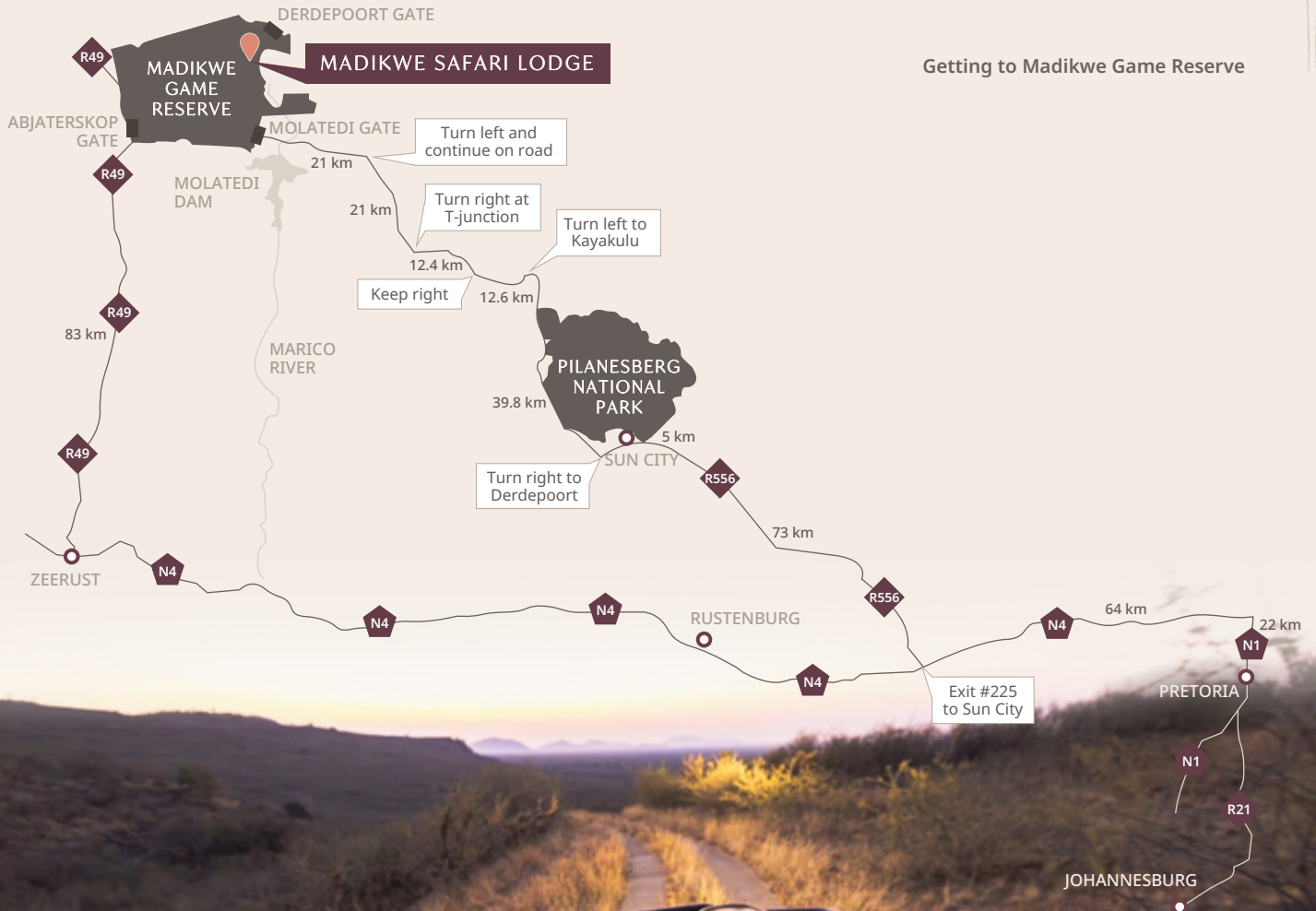
## 1.2 WHERE MADIKWE GAME RESERVE IS

Madikwe Game Reserve lies in the **central-northern reaches of South Africa**, sharing its northern boundary with Botswana. The reserve sits within a balance of remoteness and accessibility: wild enough to feel genuinely untamed, yet within easy reach of Johannesburg by air or road.

### ● Madikwe Game Reserve within South Africa



# Getting to Madikwe Game Reserve



## 1.3 GETTING THERE

### BY AIR (RECOMMENDED):

- **Scheduled and charter flights** operate daily from Johannesburg (OR Tambo) to **Madikwe Eastern Airstrip**
- **Approximate flight time:** 1 hour
- **Operator:** Federal Air
- Short open-vehicle lodge transfer from the airstrip on arrival - **approximately 15 minutes**
- Ideal for short stays and multi-destination itineraries – and the most practical option for international guests

### RESERVE AIRSTRIPS:

#### **Madikwe Eastern Airstrip**

Used by Madikwe Safari Lodge and the majority of scheduled flights

#### **Madikwe Western Airstrip**

Alternative airstrip serving the western side of the reserve

### BY ROAD:

- Approximately **4 to 4.5 hours** from Johannesburg to the reserve gates
- Additional **30 to 40 minutes** within the reserve to reach the lodge
- Accessible via the main reserve gates, followed by well-maintained gravel roads
- Suitable for self-drive guests; private road transfers can be arranged
- **Zeerust** is the closest town en route, useful as a point of reference for road-trip itineraries

### RESERVE GATES:

Madikwe Game Reserve is accessible via five gates: **Derdepoort, Molatedi, Tau, Abjaterskop, and Wonderboom.** Madikwe Safari Lodge is accessible via the **Abjaterskop or Molatedi gates only.**

**Gate hours:** All reserve gates are open from **6:00 AM to 6:00 PM daily.** No entry or exit is permitted outside of these hours.

*\*Madikwe Game Reserve charges per-guest entry fees and a per-guest conservation levy – please confirm current rates with reservations at the time of booking.*

## 1.4 WHAT MAKES THE RESERVE UNIQUE

*Madikwe game reserve stands apart from South Africa's better-known safari destinations on several counts:*

### A MALARIA-FREE BIG FIVE RESERVE

One of the few Big Five reserves in South Africa where prophylactic medication is not required – a significant advantage for **families with young children, older travellers**, guests with **compromised immune systems**, and anyone who simply prefers to avoid taking medication.

### A UNIQUE ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION ZONE

Madikwe game reserve sits at the meeting point of the **Kalahari** and the **bushveld** biomes. This convergence produces a landscape of open savannah, rocky outcrops, wooded areas, and riverine systems – and supports both classic bushveld species and arid-zone specialists in a single reserve.

### A CONSERVATION SUCCESS STORY

Madikwe Game Reserve is one of South Africa's great conservation success stories: a former area of degraded farmland transformed into a Big Five wilderness through **Operation Phoenix**, with wildlife tourism intended to support conservation, employment, and socio-economic development for surrounding communities.

### LOW VEHICLE DENSITY AND CONTROLLED SIGHTINGS

Madikwe game reserve's **low vehicle density** is one of its most defining characteristics. The reserve operates strict sighting protocols – **limiting the number of vehicles at any one sighting** to protect the animals and preserve the integrity of each encounter, with timed limits and queue management when other vehicles are waiting. This keeps the safari experience calm, respectful, and unhurried – and gives guests a genuine sense of space.

### A NON-MIGRATORY, YEAR-ROUND DESTINATION

Wildlife in Madikwe game reserve is **non-migratory**, supported by permanent water sources and a semi-arid climate. There is no defined "off season" – game viewing remains consistently rewarding throughout the year.

### GENUINELY UNCROWDED

Madikwe game reserve receives a fraction of the visitor numbers of South Africa's most popular safari destinations. Combined with the vehicle-density rules, this gives guests a sense of space and exclusivity that's increasingly rare in mainstream safari areas.





## 1.5 WILDLIFE

Madikwe game reserves diverse habitats, permanent water sources, and non-migratory populations make for consistently rewarding game viewing across all seasons.

BIG FIVE	Lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo, rhinoceros (White and Black)
OTHER KEY PREDATORS AND RARE SPECIES	<b>African wild dog</b> - Madikwe Game Reserve is one of the best places in southern Africa to see this endangered species <b>Cheetah, spotted hyena, and the elusive brown hyena</b>
PLAINS GAME	Large herds of zebra, giraffe, wildebeest, eland, kudu, impala, and waterbuck
BIRDLIFE	Over <b>350 recorded bird species</b> , with peak birding from October to April
OCCASIONAL AND ELUSIVE SIGHTINGS	Aardvark, aardwolf, honey badger, serval, caracal, bat-eared fox, porcupine, genet, and pangolin

## 1.6 SEASONS & CLIMATE

Madikwe game reserve experiences a **semi-arid climate**, making it a comfortable safari destination throughout the year.

### Summer (October - March)

- Warm to hot days, averaging **25–35°C (77–95°F)**
- Afternoon or evening thunderstorms are common, typically short-lived
- Peak season for **birding** and lush, green landscapes
- Newborn animals and dramatic skies

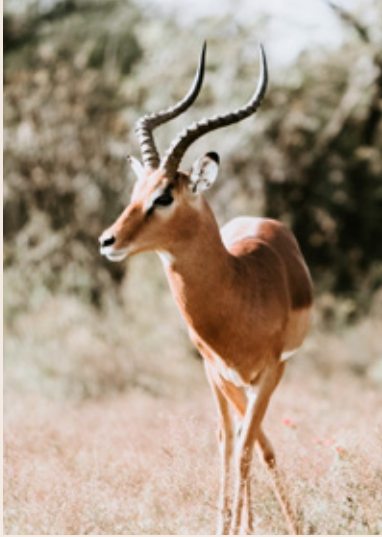
### Winter (May - August)

- Mild, dry days averaging **18–25°C (65–77°F)**
- Cooler mornings and evenings, occasionally dropping below **5°C (40°F)**
- Excellent visibility and concentrated wildlife activity around water sources
- Classic safari conditions

### Spring & Autumn (April, September)

- Transitional months with moderate temperatures and balanced conditions
- Often considered the best weeks of the year – warm days, soft light, and a balance of greenery and visibility

Madikwe game reserve's combination of semi-arid climate and non-migratory wildlife, supports **year-round safari travel** without a defined off-season.



## 1.7 POSITIONING MADIKWE GAME RESERVE

### MADIKWE GAME RESERVE AS A STANDALONE SAFARI DESTINATION

Madikwe game reserve holds its own as a complete safari destination. Guests do not need to combine it with another reserve to access a full Big Five safari experience – the reserve's size, diversity, and consistent game viewing more than support a standalone stay of three to five nights.

#### Madikwe game reserve is particularly well-suited to:

- **Families** travelling with children of any age (malaria-free)
- **First-time safari travellers** who want a calm, easy introduction to safari
- **Multi-generational and milestone groups** travelling together
- **Travellers with health considerations** who cannot or prefer not to take malaria medication
- **Guests heading to or returning from Botswana** – Madikwe game reserve sits directly on the border
- **Repeat safari travellers** wanting an experience different to the Kruger National Park or the Sabi Sand Nature Reserve

### MADIKWE GAME RESERVE AS A STANDALONE SAFARI DESTINATION

Madikwe game reserve combines smoothly with a wide range of South African and southern African destinations:

- **Madikwe + Cape Town** – the classic South African safari + city/coast combination
- **Madikwe + Garden Route / Winelands** – extended South African road journeys
- **Madikwe + Botswana (Okavango, Chobe, Linyanti)** – natural geographic flow, with seamless onward travel from the reserve
- **Madikwe + Victoria Falls** – adventure and natural wonder paired with safari
- **Madikwe + Kruger / Sabi Sands** – Kalahari-bushveld contrast against the lowveld; two complementary safari experiences in one itinerary
- **Madikwe + Indian Ocean (Mozambique, Mauritius, Seychelles)** – safari plus beach
- **Madikwe + Sun City / Pilanesberg** – approximately 2 hours by road; popular for family add-ons and group itineraries

## 1.8 CONSERVATION LEVIES & RESERVE FEES

Madikwe Game Reserve charges entry fees and a per-guest conservation levy. All proceeds contribute directly to the reserve's conservation programmes and community partnerships.

LEVIES & FEES	ADULT	CHILD
Road entrance fee	R180 per person	R80 per child (8 years and younger)
Airstrip landing fee	R240 per person	R150 per child (8 years and younger)
Guest conservation levy	R520 per person per night	R260 per child per night (12 years and younger)

**Note:** Child age thresholds differ between the entrance/landing fees and the conservation levy. Fees are set by the reserve and are subject to periodic increase – please confirm current rates with reservations at the time of booking.

## 1.9 MADIKWE SAFARI LODGE WITHIN THE RESERVE

Madikwe Safari Lodge is positioned in the **central-eastern region** of Madikwe Game Reserve, on an elevated ridge overlooking the plains. The lodge comprises **three distinct safari camps and one private villa** – accommodating couples, families, multi-generational groups, and exclusive-use bookings under a single, cohesive family-owned brand.

For full details on the lodge – including accommodation, facilities, family offering, and key contacts – please refer to the **comprehensive Madikwe Safari Lodge fact sheet and the Madikwe Safari Lodge family fact sheet.**

## RESERVATIONS & CONTACT

### KEY CONTACTS:

#### *Reservations*



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### BRAND ASSETS, IMAGES & INFORMATION (TRADE ROOM):

Access to the Madikwe Safari Lodge brand library, including high-resolution imagery, logos, fact sheets, and supporting collateral:

ACCESS LIBRARY

**Reservations.** +27 (0) 64 852 5304

**After-hours assistance.** +27 (0) 78 038 6240

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