



SELF DRIVE DIRECTIONS

V2.5



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GENERAL INFORMATION



Just a heads up, our enchanting Big Skies camps are nestled deep within a charming Zulu-speaking community, within the captivating Isimangaliso Wetland Park. Now, the journey to us is an adventure in itself – we're talking roads less traveled, potentially obstructed signs (blame the wild vegetation), and mobile signal that can be a tad elusive. But then again, isn't that all part of the fun? ***This document is to help you avoid the moment fun becomes frustration.***

Got a 2x4? Don't fret! Simply park it in the nearby town of Manguzi. We've got a free, secure spot just for you. Simply navigate to the parking lot and then we'll lift you to camp. **We can arrange a transfer at an additional cost.** Just make sure you've booked your transfer before arrival - we wouldn't want to turn anyone away!

Heading to camp by yourself? **Please drop us a line with your ETA - you can whatsapp +27 71 610 8045.** We know you're an expert road-tripper, but remember, getting to camp is all on you. Please ensure you have this document saved somewhere easily accessible and have notified our reservations team or the whatsapp line above of your movements.

Should you not arrive at Gugs due to losing your way, becoming stranded or experiencing technical difficulties with your vehicle, it is not the responsibility of Big Skies to recover or search for you. We will do everything possible to facilitate the hiring of someone to recover and/or assist you. All costs incurred will be for your own account and Big Skies cannot be held liable for any delays or missed services. Big Skies, additionally, will not accept any liability, responsibility or claim for compensation, for any incident or accident involving you, your vehicle and/or any third party. We highly recommend that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance as per our booking terms and conditions.

USE GOOGLE MAPS TO OUR PARKING LOT BUT NOT TO CAMP - IT WILL GET YOU LOST! FOLLOW OUR ARTIST MADE SIGNS INSTEAD, THEY'LL GUIDE YOU STRAIGHT TO CAMP. PLUS, WE'VE GOT THIS CHARMING DIRECTION BOOKLET FOR YOU.



DISTANCE & TIME CARD

TRAVELING TIMES IN HOURS (APPROXIMATE)

40 mins	4.5	2hrs	9-10 hrs	2 hrs	2.5 hrs	2.5 hrs	3.5 hrs	CAMP
3 hrs	2 hrs						RICHARDS BAY	236 km
2 hrs	3 hrs		6-7 hrs			PHINDA		115 km
2 hrs	4 hrs		4.5 hrs		PONGOLA			197 km
1.5 hrs	3.5 hrs		5.5 hrs	JOZINI				126km
8-9 hrs		6 hrs	OR TAMBO (JNB)					606 km
1.5 hrs	2.5 - 3 hrs	HLUHLUWE	530 km					137 km
4-4.5 hrs	KING SHAKA (DBN)	250 km						371 km
MANGUZI PARKING LOT	350 km	116 km	585 km	105 km	176 km	94 km	215 km	28 km

TRAVELING TIMES IN KILOMETERS (APPROXIMATE)



DURBAN TO PARKING LOT

Directions to Big Skies Manguzi Parking Area from Durban
(travel time approximately 5 – 6 hours)

You can use Google maps for this part!

- Departing from Durban or King Shaka Airport, head north on the N2 highway. Pass by Ballito, Mtunzini, Empangeni, Richard's Bay, and Mtubatuba. Take the Hluhluwe/Sodwana offramp to get onto the R22.
- Hluhluwe town is 3km from the N2. Traverse the town and continue on the R22 for 80km to Mbazwane (Mbazwana). Proceed straight through two traffic circles.
- About 30km after Mbazwane on R22, you will encounter signposts for the D1849 Coastal Forest Reserve road on your right. Keep going straight for another 15km on the R22 until you reach the Phelandaba traffic circle (also known as KwaNgwanase on maps).
- At the Phelandaba traffic circle, turn right and travel 22km to the town of Manguzi/Farazella Border Post.
- Upon reaching Manguzi town, you will pass an Engen garage followed by Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) on the right. Shortly after, turn right at the Fa Da Shop/Happy Supermarket. This turn is opposite the SuperSpar supermarket on the left. If you reach the Total Garage on the main road, you have gone too far and need to turn back.
- After turning right at the Fa Da Shop, continue on this side road past Themba Nkosi Pharmacy on the right. Cross a small stream shortly after.
- Immediately after crossing the stream, the road splits; take the right fork. The tar road ends just past the small stream crossing, and around 200-300m ahead, you will see a large white wall on the right. Look for the 4228 Gele Gele Street Big Skies Car Park sign painted on the wall. Our security guard and your guide will be waiting here to greet you. Toilet facilities are available on-site.

Contact Numbers:

Gugulesizwe (camp management): +27 66 283 3268 / +27 66 283 3265

Big Skies (reservations; Julie): +27 71 610 8045

DURBAN TO D1849

4X4 Self-Drive route into camp

Directions to Big Skies Manguzi Parking Area from Durban
(travel time approximately 5 – 6 hours)

You can use Google maps for this part!

- Departing from **Durban** or King Shaka Airport, head **north** on the **N2** highway. Pass by Ballito, Mtunzini, Empangeni, Richard's Bay, and Mtubatuba. **Take the Hluhluwe/Sodwana offramp to get onto the R22.**
- Hluhluwe town is 3km from the N2. Traverse through the town and **continue on the R22 for 80km to Mbazwane (Mbazwana).** Proceed straight through two traffic circles and **continue on the R22.**
- **About 15–20 minutes later, look for the D1849 turnoff on your right.**
- **Refer to page 16 for the 4X4 Self-Drive directions into camp**

Quick Links - Google Maps:

[Hluhluwe](#)

[Mbazwana](#)

[D1849](#)

Contact Numbers:

Gugulesizwe (camp management): +27 66 283 3268 / +27 66 283 3265

Big Skies (reservations; Julie): +27 71 610 8045



GAUTENG TO PARKING LOT

(travel time approximately 8.5 – 9 hours)

You can use Google maps for this part!

- Leaving Johannesburg, follow the N17 east past Springs toward Bethal.
- Leaving Pretoria, you can take either:
 - a.) the N4 east, turning off onto the R545 to Ogies and then Bethal,
- OR**
- b.) the R50 through Delmas to join the N17 at Leandra, continuing to Bethal.
- From Bethal, continue along the N17 to Ermelo, where you will join the N2 and then proceed to Piet Retief and Pongola.
- From Pongola, continue on the N2 for approximately 50 km. At just over 50km from Pongola, take the Jozini turnoff to the left. Follow the road 20km up onto the Lebombo Escarpment.
- From Jozini, head north over the dam wall for about 40km until you reach a T-junction of the village of Bhambanana.
- Turn right at the Bhambanana T-junction. At the 45km mark, you will reach the Phelandaba traffic circle. Continue straight through the traffic circle and follow the sign to Manguzi/Farazella Border Post – approximately 22km.
- Continue along the main road, passing the Engen Garage and KFC. Shortly after, you will see the Spar on your left. Across from Spar, is Fa Da Shop. Turn right down this street. If you reach the Total Garage on the main road, you have gone too far and need to turn around.
- After turning right at the Fa Da Shop, continue down this side road. Cross over a small bridge.
- After crossing the stream, the road forks; take the right fork. The tar road ends here, and you will continue for about 200-300m until you see a large white wall with Big Skies marked. There is a toilet at our parking lot.

Contact Numbers:

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GAUTENG TO D1849 4X4 ONLY

Self-Drive route into camp

Route A - Most direct route, see Route-B for smoother roads via Hluhluwe

(travel time approximately 8.5 – 9 hours)

You can use Google maps for this part!

- Leaving Johannesburg, follow the N17 east past Springs toward **Bethal**.
- Leaving Pretoria, you can take either:
 - a.) the N4 east, turning off onto the R545 to Ogies and then Bethal, **OR**
 - b.) the R50 through Delmas to join the N17 at Leandra, continuing to Bethal.
- From **Bethal**, continue along the N17 to **Ermelo**, where you will join the **N2** and then proceed to **Piet Retief** and **Pongola**.
- From **Pongola**, continue on the **N2** for approximately 50 km. At just over 50km from Pongola, take the **Jozini** turnoff to the left. Follow the road 20km up onto the Lebombo Escarpment.
- From **Jozini**, **keep left over the dam wall** for about 40km until you reach a **T-junction of the village of Bhambanana**.
- **Turn right** at the Bhambanana T-junction. At the 45km mark, you will reach the **Phelandaba traffic circle**.
- At **Phelendaba traffic circle**, **turn right at traffic circle onto the R22** - continue straight and follow signs to Mbazwana/Hluhluwe. Approx 15km later you will see the D1849 signpost – turn left onto the gravel road.

Quick Links - Google Maps:

[Bethal](#)

[Ermelo](#)

[Mkhondo \(Piet Retief\)](#)

[Pongola](#)

[Jozini Dam wall](#)

[Bhambanana](#)

[Phelendaba Circle](#)

[D1849](#)

Contact Numbers:

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GAUTENG TO D1849 4X4 ONLY

Self-Drive route into camp

Route B - Roads are in better condition, slightly longer distance but smoother journey.

You can use Google maps for this part!

- Leaving Johannesburg, follow the N17 east past Springs toward **Bethal**.
- Leaving Pretoria, you can take either:
 - a.) the N4 east, turning off onto the R545 to Ogies and then Bethal, **OR**
 - b.) the R50 through Delmas to join the N17 at Leandra, continuing to Bethal.
- From **Bethal**, continue along the N17 to **Ermelo**, where you will join the **N2** and then proceed to **Piet Retief** and **Pongola**.
- From **Pongola**, continue on the **N2** Take the **R22 off-ramp at Hluhluwe/Sodwana** and continue on the **R22 to Mbazwana**.
- Continue **through Mbazwana**.
- **About 15–20 minutes later, look for the D1849 turnoff on your right.**
- **Refer to page 16 for the 4X4 Self-Drive directions into camp**

Quick Links - Google Maps:

[Bethal](#)

[Ermelo](#)

[Mkhondo \(Piet Retief\)](#)

[Pongola](#)

[Hluhluwe](#)

[Mbazwana](#)

[D1849](#)

Contact Numbers:

Gugulesizwe (camp management): +27 66 283 3268 / +27 66 283 3265

Big Skies (reservations; Julie): +27 71 610 8045



- GOOGLE MAPS OR SIMILAR APP CAN BE USED FOR DIRECTIONS TO MANGUZI BUT NOT TO CAMP.
- ALL PICK UPS ARE DONE IN MANGUZI.

PARKING LOT (MANGUZI) TO CAMP

(4X4 vehicles only & **DO NOT USE GOOGLE MAPS**)

(travel time approximately 1 hour; limited cellphone signal)

- It will take approximately 1 hour from Big Skies Manguzi Parking to Gugs or Ubunye camp.



Leaving the Big Skies secure parking in Manguzi, turn right and travel south along a gravelled district road for approximately 700m;



at this point take the right fork onto a slightly smaller gravel road.
Follow the gravel road for 3km

PARKING LOT (MANGUZI) TO CAMP



Turn left at the above T-junction turn left and follow this district dirt road south for nearly 7km



At the 7km mark, there is a turn off to the left here that takes you across the Siyadla River to Bhanga Nek; **Do not turn left**; keep right and continue.

PARKING LOT (MANGUZI) TO CAMP



After around 8,5km you will pass KwaZibi clinic on your right, Follow this sandy road till you reach something of a T-junction pictured below



2.7km after passing Kwa-Zibi clinic, go left at this T-Junction and follow the main dirt track

PARKING LOT (MANGUZI) TO CAMP



1.6km later keep right and follow the road and signs

- Follow this sandy road and follow Gugs & Ubunye/ Big Skies signs to get into camp from here.
- We have placed hand-painted signposts at pivotal points but if ever in any doubt please don't hesitate to ask directions from anyone in the friendly KwaMpukane community. They will be able to assist.
- Landmarks to look out for in this last 2,5km stretch include driving through a eucalyptus plantation, past an outhouse on the left with the label 'DJ Mlambo', after this, a wooden structure serving as a community bar on the right. At all times you should be able to see an old, bent fire tower on a dune, to the east/ocean side/left hand side;
- Having passed the bar mentioned above, you will shortly see a Gugs signpost, turning left. Travel down into a dip and follow right turn at the bottom of the dip, up an incline on the other side, leading into camp.



Please be mindful of animals on the roads!



Reach out to us if you are unsure if your car can make the 4x4 aspect of the trip and we will advise you!



Please be wary as roads can become flooded in times of high rainfall.

- GOOGLE MAPS OR SIMILAR APP CAN BE USED FOR DIRECTIONS TO MANGUZI BUT NOT TO CAMP.
- ALL PICK UPS ARE DONE IN MANGUZI.

4X4 ONLY - SELFDRIVE DIRECTIONS INTO CAMP VIA D1849

Important:

- 4x4 vehicles only
- Do not use Google Maps (routes shown are incorrect)
- Phone signal is very limited – please download these directions before traveling
- Travel time: approx. 1 hour/ 30KM from turning onto the D1849

Getting to the D1849 turnoff From Durban / Sodwana direction:

- Travel north on the N2.
- Take the R22 off-ramp at Hluhluwe/Sodwana and continue on the R22 to Mbazwana.
- Continue through Mbazwana.
- About 15–20 minutes later, look for the D1849 turnoff on your right. This is where your odometer starts at 0.0 km. For detailed directions from Durban, refer to page 6.

From Gauteng / Johannesburg direction:

- Refer to page 8 & 9 for directions from JHB to the D1849

**You are looking for this sign along the R22
at the start of the D1849 from both directions
Along with the small green D1849 sign
(not pictured):**



Contact Numbers:

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Big Skies (reservations Julie):

+27 71 610 8045

Once you turn onto the D1849, you should see this sign on the left (1). Continue straight and **Please WhatsApp the camp phone when you turn onto the D1849:**



After 4.1 km, you will see Coastal Cashew on your right (2), carry on straight:



At 12.9km (8.8km from Cashews) you will come to this intersection(3), keep right:



At 14.9km (2km from the previous intersection above) continue straight at the below intersection (4):



At 17.2 km (2.3km from the last intersection above) You will turn left, off of the D1849 (5A) and continue straight over both intersections (5B&5C) as pictured below, ensure to check for other vehicles:



At 18.6km (1.4km after the above intersection) you will pass the sign for Mbumbulu on your right (6), continue straight:



At 22.2km (3.6Km after Mbumbulu sign) turn left into the eucalyptus plantation (7). Continue straight through the plantation:



At 24.1Km (1.9Km from the left turn into the plantation)
the eucalyptus plantation ends and turns into indigenous
forest (8). Continue straight:



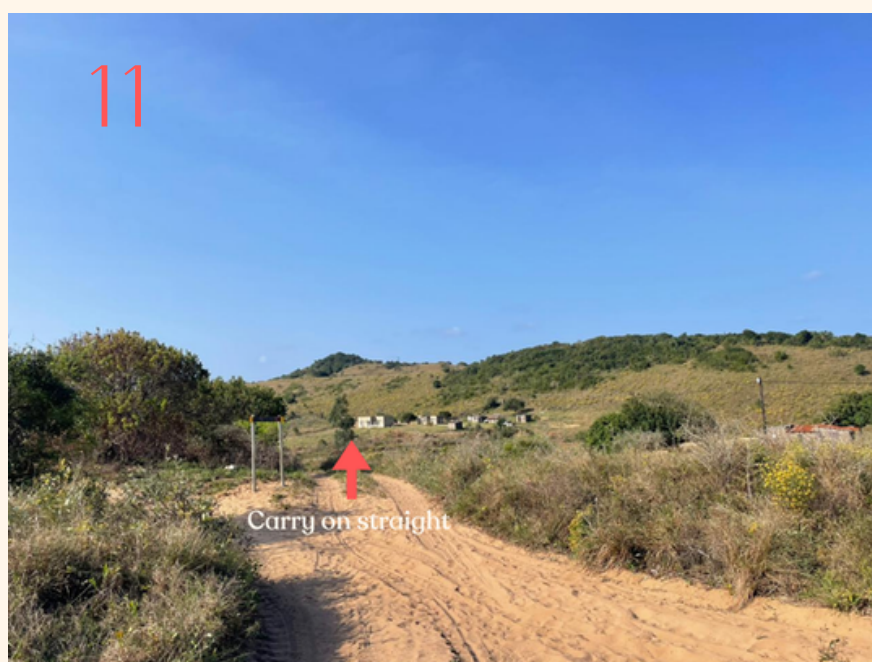
At 25.6Km (1.5Km from the above point) there is a fork in
the road, keep right (9):



At 27.8Km (2.2Km since the right turn above) the road opens up onto what's known as the "Cow Pan" follow this road (10):



At 28.6Km (0.8km from the above point) Small rise into the community, with houses on your right (11). Go straight across and down the hill:



At 28.7Km (0.1km from the above point) Turn right at the T-junction (12) and continue up the next hill:



At 29.1Km (0.4Km after the right turn) you will reach this intersection (13), to Ubunye / Research, Keep right. To Gugs, Keep left and follow the track and signs:



If you're going to Ubunye / Research:

- At the 29.1 km intersection, keep right.
- You will drive alongside the outside of the Gugs main camp fence (on your left).
- Continue until you see the Research/Ubunye Camp sign.
- Turn left through the gate (please close it behind you).
- Follow the track uphill, then for Ubunye take the first left and for research take the first right at the top of the hill.

Notes

- Please drive slowly in the community and look out for pedestrians, children, and livestock.
- In wet weather, the roads may be slippery or sandy. Engage 4x4 where needed.

Our signs along the way



ARTIST MADE SIGNS IN THIS STYLE



LITTLE BLUE SIGNS