

## Desert and Delta Safaris – Rhino Reintroduction and Relocation Program

(Maun, Botswana)

Since 2008, Desert and Delta Safaris has been very active in our endeavors to raise awareness and further funding for the Botswana Rhino Reintroduction and Relocation program, a public/private enterprise initiative which involves key Government departments, including the Department of Wildlife and National Parks, the Botswana Anti-poaching units, which are heavily backed by the Botswana Defense Force, ourselves and other key players from the private sector.



This involvement for Desert and Delta Safaris was initiated by default of us discovering Rhino activity in the Leroo La Tau area at the time of us re-building the lodge before its re-opening prior to June 2008. We were most surprised at that time to discover that there were two female Rhino which had established their territory in the Leroo La Tau area. Upon enquiry and after involving the Rhino authorities, it was revealed that these two female Rhino were part of the reintroduction program in which Wilderness Safaris was instrumental in releasing Rhino into the northern region of Chiefs Island in the middle of the Okavango Delta. We were all amazed at how these two ladies had made the 250km+ journey out of the Okavango to establish their territory in what was then a dry and barren place (as the

Boteti River had not seen flowing water for close on 26 years at that time). The Rhino experts felt that should we be able to introduce a bull Rhino to the area at that time, they would definitely be able to establish a more fixed territory and remain within that area. Fears of them moving further to the south of the Leroo La Tau area was compounded by possible complications with clear human interaction and raise the risk for poaching. A bull Rhino was made available from Khama Rhino Sanctuary and in a matter of weeks, Desert and Delta Safaris financed and built a Rhino release Boma near Khumaga gate of the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park. We released this bull into the area on the official opening day of Leroo La Tau.

It was shortly after this that we accepted our responsibility as a company in ensuring we fund and play a part in all Rhino related activities in the Leroo La Tau area. Through this, we developed and started promoting the Rhino Packages, from which a portion of the cost of the safari is channeled directly back into the Rhino related activities at Leroo La Tau.

In October 2010, we were once again very involved, along with the Department of Wildlife and National Park's Rhino action team as well as the Botswana Anti-Poaching unit, in darting and inserting radio tracking devices into the three Rhino in that area.

Inserting the tracking devices, as above, was crucial as Southern Africa had seen a rapid increase in poaching activity, driven by the greed and ignorance of the demands from the Asian animal product markets. This had allowed the Anti-Poaching Units and the Botswana defense force to closely monitor the movement and well-being of these three animals. The clear president set by Government maintaining high presence by our anti-poaching units and the defense force is furthermore a great deterrent for any likely poaching activity or poachers in this area. They have a very strict no tolerance mandate!

At the time of us darting these Rhino, we also conducted pregnancy tests on the two females. Unfortunately these were both returned as negative at that time. We then started sourcing another Bull to introduce to the area, which was achieved in July 2011. Once again, the release of this younger bull was financed by Desert and Delta Safaris from the funds which we had been able to raise through our Rhino Packages.

In early 2012, we confirmed that the first baby Rhino born within the Makgadikagadi Pans National park in what is clearly regarded to be close on 200 years of no rhino (due to the complete decimation of Rhino to traders and "sport hunters" and poaching within this time). So, despite the pregnancy tests, given the 15 month gestation period, this female was definitely pregnant at the time that we darted her and inserted the tracking devices. Shortly after the first arrival, it was discovered that a second calf had been born to the other female.

Subsequent funding has been used to re-do the tracking devices, this funding finances the use of helicopter, veterinary support, ground crew and the physical tracking devices. Once again pregnancy tests were conducted and we are very happy that an additional two calves have arrived in recent time.

Desert and Delta Safaris will continue to focus on the Botswana Rhino Reintroduction and Relocation Program's great work within the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park as a key environmentally focused program to fund and donate towards. We wish to thank all our agents and guests who have booked and travelled on our Rhino Packages from which we have been able to finance our involvement to date, and hopefully much more assistance for the future of these Rhino populations.

## **About Desert and Delta Safaris**

Desert and Delta Safaris is a 100% subsidiary of Chobe Holdings Limited. The company has been operational within the Botswana Tourism Industry for over 35 years, has direct ownership to all of its products and does not market or manage third party products or services.

From the company's base in Maun, Desert and Delta Safaris continues to strengthen its offering and is one of the best safari circuits in Botswana. The brand is actively involved with local charities and is one of the industry leaders for citizen development, staff wellness and welfare.

## **The Desert and Delta Safaris Portfolio**

What makes Desert and Delta Safaris unique is that our properties in Botswana are strategically located within the key wildlife areas of Botswana. A combination of these areas allow for quite possibly the best safari circuit within the destination. All our properties are common rated and we offer a long stay NET rate structure applicable to any of our properties within any one booking.

Another key advantage to the Desert and Delta Safaris circuit is the fact that every property is completely different to the next. We have specifically avoided using the same building styles, furnishings, decor and even cutlery and crockery for a reason. Every destination should be experienced for its own merits and atmosphere and although our high service levels are maintained throughout all of our properties, the physical lodge or camp experience is different.

Our properties include:

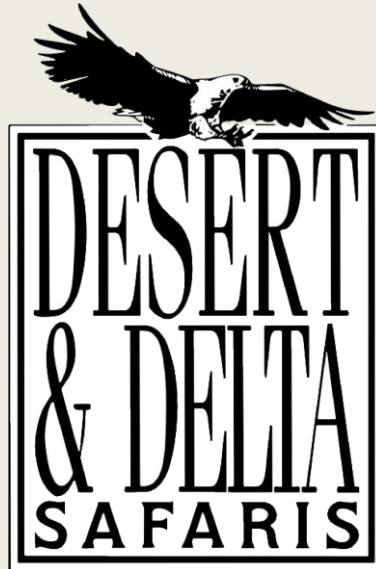
Leroo La Tau, Makgadikgadi Pans National Park  
Camp Moremi, Moremi Game Reserve  
Camp Xakanaxa, Moremi Game Reserve  
Camp Okavango, Okavango Delta  
Xugana Island Lodge, Okavango Delta  
Savute Safari Lodge, Chobe National Park  
Chobe Game Lodge, Chobe National Park  
Chobe Savanna Lodge, Chobe River, Namibia

For more information on Desert & Delta Safaris :- [www.desertdelta.com](http://www.desertdelta.com) or to view our latest videos of our company, lodges and camps:- [Desert & Delta Safaris Videos](#)

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**Reservations office:**

**Telephone: (+27) 11394 3873**

**Fax: (+27) 11394 2112**

**Email: [info@desertdelta.com](mailto:info@desertdelta.com)**

**Marketing Office:**

**Private Bag 310, Maun, Botswana**

**Telephone: (+267) 6861559**

**Fax: (+267) 6860037**

**E-mail [marketing@desertdelta.com](mailto:marketing@desertdelta.com)**

**[www.desertdelta.com](http://www.desertdelta.com)**

**To view the video of Desert & Delta Safaris**

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