



There are a number of certainties that guests at Kapama Private Game Reserve, one of South Africa's most acclaimed safari destinations – situated outside of the Lowveld town of Hoedspruit – can expect to enjoy;

uncompromising professionalism, sublime comfort, delectable cuisine, and a generally world-class holiday experience. Yet, as is nature's way, some things cannot be guaranteed, even at a top-rated destination as Kapama, and sometimes supreme skill and effort is required to bring the splendour of

the Bush to life while on safari. Guests are not always sensitive to this reality, and even the most carefully planned safari vacation may not necessarily deliver an encounter with one, or more, of the Big Five.

This, however, was not the case during our recent visit to Kapama Karula and



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Kapama Private Game Reserve

A stay at the world-renowned Kapama Private Game Reserve is more than merely a collection of experiences. Curated to create lasting memories for couples and families alike, there are few safari destinations that match its uncompromising style.

Kapama Southern Camp. On our first safari of the weekend, the crisp autumn air was soon heavy with excitement when our experienced tracker, Orise Sibuyi, announced quietly yet with a sense of great urgency, that a splendidly rare sighting was about to unfold before us. Hardly a kilometre from

the entrance to Kapama Karula, Orise's keen eye spotted a male leopard – estimated to be between six and eight years old – hiding behind an anthill, his piercing gaze barely visible above the brush.

Sighting a leopard in the bush is not a privilege bestowed upon every safari guest,

Leopard sighting (Photo by Viljoen Jordaan)



Kapama Karula bar & guest area

even at Kapama Private Game Reserve, one of South Africa's most illustrious and luxurious private game sanctuaries. And doing so from a moving vehicle is even more remarkable.

Almost unbelievably, barely 500 metres before this spectacular leopard sighting, Orise and Viljoen Jordaan (our guide during our stay at Kapama), delivered an almost equally rare sighting of two lionesses lazily sleeping off an earlier Impala kill - the evidence of which lay carefully hidden from vultures under some nearby shrubbery.

Two such rare sightings in short succession are a mere fluke, some might say, but considering the events that unfolded during our three-night stay here, it is undeniable that every aspect of a visit to Kapama is the result of careful planning, professional dedication, and a passion for delivering life-enhancing memories for all guests.

BESPOKE LIVING

Offering an authentic African safari experience stretching across 15,000 hectares



*Villa living at
Kapama Karula*

towards the Greater Kruger area, Kapama Private Game Reserve comprises four diverse, luxurious bush camps and lodges. Each is carefully positioned within this wildlife sanctuary, and offers a fresh approach for your safari holiday.

Kapama Karula is the reserve's flagship property, and is positioned along the Klaserie River, where its ten luxurious villas and two family villas are tucked into the surrounding riverine Bushveld, each a bespoke paradise hideaway with a heated plunge pool and viewing deck.

Life at Kapama Karula is lived at a slow and steady pace, surrounded by elegant décor, carefully curated gourmet meals, and abundance both in the natural surroundings and in the level of care that guests enjoy.

As the lush Bushveld often hides its rarest experiences just beyond site, Kapama Karula's contemporary structures seem to blend almost seamlessly into the background, creating a splendid sanctuary for Kapama's most discerning guests. Meaning "place of peace", Kapama Karula exudes calmness,

with wraparound views of the African bush enhancing the sense of tranquillity here.

Each of Kapama Karula's 12 luxurious villas set the highest standards of comfort and elegance, in an open-plan living space that rivals some of the best in the country. Muted earthy tones and sumptuous textures engage the senses, as the expansive living space flows through to the wooden deck and to the bush beyond. A particular highlight is the heated splash pool that, even at the cusp between autumn and winter, provided us with a welcome libation one early evening during our stay.

As one of two lodges in the reserve that boast a spa facility, Kapama Karula adds the fine distinction of being a wellness destination to its accolades. Surrounded by glass, the award-winning Karula Spa has an intimate connection with the surrounding nature, and after a day out exploring, there's nothing more welcome than a pampering treatment.

With four deluxe treatment rooms and a range of revitalising health and beauty treatments, this spa uses only the finest

quality products, including the new range of BABOR professional skincare.

Guests can also keep up with virtually any rigorous exercise routine using the spa's state-of-the-art Technogym equipment (complimentary for guests), or take a relaxing break from it all in the spa pool with its built-in loungers and underwater jets, or the hydrotherapy room with a steam room and ice plunge.

Naturally, Kapama Karula prides itself on pampering guests with only the finest cuisine throughout your stay. From the carefully curated dining space that gracefully combines the elegance of the surroundings with a truly African-inspired menu, to the open-air bar area where morning coffee, afternoon tea, and pre-dinner drinks and snacks are served, Kapama Karula is perfectly aligned with its guests' highest expectations.

EXPLORE AT YOUR OWN PACE

Located in the reserves to the extreme south, the spectacular Kapama Southern Camp offers 15 luxury-thatched

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*Steam room & ice plunge
at Kapama Karula*

suites and ten villas (of which three are set aside for families or groups of four), where we spent two nights of pampering at the family-style facility that is discreetly hidden in the surrounding indigenous landscape.

Like its sister camps and lodges, guests are welcomed at Southern Camp through a spectacular reception area with its curio shop and guest briefing area lounge. While the Kapama elegance is evident here as much as at the reserve's other lodges, Southern Camp's relaxed atmosphere is evident in the soft furnishings, natural chandeliers, and indigenous Nguni-skins and rugs.

Kapama River Lodge is the largest of Kapama's four facilities, boasting flowing, opulently furnished public spaces, and an expansive deck leading to a rim-flow swimming pool. Beyond lies an expanse of soft river sand, where atmospheric dinners are enjoyed under the stars. With 64 available suites, guests may select between standard or deluxe suites, and royal or spa suites at this, the main accommodation facility at Kapama Private Game Reserve.

For those seeking a more traditional experience, Kapama Buffalo Camp offers an authentic bush stay in one of the camp's ten exclusive tents positioned on elevated platforms and surrounded by

the forest canopy.

TAILORED EXPERIENCES

Going above and beyond to ensure guests' every whim is catered for, is evidenced in how experiences at Kapama are presented. From the traditional morning or evening safari drives – where skilled guides are happy to share their vast knowledge of nature – to bush walks and spa treatments, there is a sense of eagerness to deliver only the best service.

As much as the surrounding nature soothes the soul here, wellness of the body is also catered for at River Lodge. While Karula's more intimate spa setting is ideal for couples or single treatments, guests at River Lodge have access to extensive spa areas with multiple treatment rooms and beautiful views across the bush landscape. Using only the finest products for skin and body, means that even the most discerning spa enthusiast will find the experience world-class.

Not visiting either Kapama Karula or River Lodge? In keeping with the reserve's high levels of service, a shuttle is available to commute guests from Southern Camp and Buffalo Camp, allowing patrons from all lodges to access Kapama's award-winning spas.





ABOVE: *Reception area at River Lodge*
 LEFT: *Kapama's Pilatus PC-12*



THE WILD, ONLY MINUTES AWAY

Kapama is known for its diverse wildlife experiences and is home to the Big 5. With over 350 bird species and over 40 species of mammals, the two daily game drives will ensure fascinating encounters with prolific wildlife. Bushwalks with a qualified and Ranger and assistant Ranger are included in the game viewing experience. The perfect way to get closer to nature and learn about her fascinating wonders.

Reaching Kapama Private Game Reserve is an easy (approximately 500 km) drive

from Johannesburg or Pretoria, although Kapama offers free transfers for guests flying into Hoedspruit airport on commercial flights. The short transfer from the airport to your designated lodge is in an open-air safari vehicle. This means within a matter of minutes, your safari adventure can begin.

For the discerning traveller seeking a more luxurious, private and customised option, Kapama's private airstrip and Pilatus PC-12 private plane grant guests the opportunity to fly directly into the reserve.

To access more information, or to reserve your next stay at one of South Africa's leading private reserves, visit www.kapama.com, or call the Kapama reservations desk at +27 12 368 0600. 📞

by *bernie hellberg* /
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just for you

Kapama Private Game reserve offers Diners Club cardholders who choose to fly into Hoedspruit, free transfers to their lodge of choice.