

Post



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Relocating to Tubu Tree Camp - August 4, 2025

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SUMMARY

Our last morning at the wonderful Chitabe Camp. On our morning drive we saw a pack of wild dogs running with hyenas, a steenbok, secretary birds, elephants and lions. Late morning we flew to Tubu Tree Camp which was great - big, luxurious rooms off an elevated boardwalk in the trees. We dropped our bags, had a late lunch then headed out with our new guide, Stan(ley) for afternoon drive where among other things we saw a leopard with two cubs and some lions. The game definitely wasn't as plentiful at Tubu. That evening we attended a traditional Boma dinner around a campfire with many food items, singing and dancing by the staff. -

Karen

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DETAIL

Today will start out like the last couple of days, with a safari game drive (looking for animals) but then we'll be flying to a new camp (our second of three). We packed last night, so this morning we dress for the drive, leave our bags inside our cabin. Since it's dark we're escorted to breakfast. Bundled and warm in the drive vehicle we speed off. Word is that there's a wild dog pack on the hunt in front of the camp.

We race off to find the dogs, passing a couple of grazing elephants along the way. We catch up to the big pack of running dogs (plus one hyena) and drive along behind them for a while. We're the second of two vehicles so it's dusty, ugh. The dogs suddenly stop as if to reorganize. Maybe what they were chasing got away. One dog poops and the hyena goes in (as they do, apparently) and eats a good portion of the dog poop. Gross! We're told it's for the calcium or some other essential nutrients.

Excitement over, we head off in another direction, thankfully. The spotting doesn't go well initially (other than the wild dogs, hyena, and elephant). The rest of the morning we do see more and more different animals (and more of ones we'd already seen). Over our drives today we see...

Wildebeest
Tsessebe
Giraffe
Guinea fowl
Elephant
Zebra
Impala
Baboon
Hornbill
Hippo
Kudu
Jackal
Ostrich
Steenbok
Sacred Ibis
Secretary Bird
and Lions.

The first lions we come across are three cubs, just sitting in the road. We're told they're waiting patiently for mom, presumably off looking for some breakfast. The cute cubs try to look adult and stare us down. Before long they get bored and rough house with each other. After a while mom returns. We've seen enough and head out.

Later in the morning our guide, Ant (short for Anthony) stops to "pick flowers" (pee). It's a good time for us to have our morning coffee and snacks. Our luggage arrives, we have coffee and say our good byes. Mike and Lisa head off in another vehicle. Tricia, Don, Karen and I (with all our luggage) heads to the airport to fly away.

At the air strip, we zip down the 'road' just off from the runway. There's such a road on either side. The job of the plane (in this case a 12 seater) is to land safely. Our job, being on the ground, is to check for any animals who might encroach the runway during landing or takeoff. If found, we're to make noises to scare them away. We do see four elephants (two moms each with a young 'un) a couple of yards from the runway. This being a concern, our driver bangs his hand on the side of the vehicle. The nearest big elephant, in turn, trumpets and shakes her head vigorously, to scare us away. We don't flinch so the pachyderms eventually start to saunter a safer distance from the runway.

The plane lands, taxis, stops and sets up to let off and take on passengers. As we head from our vehicle to the plane, someone points out a mom lion, a few dozen yards away, transporting a small cub, dangling from her mouth. What a crazy day!

On the plane is the four of us plus two others. We fly 10 minutes to another camp where we pick up two more people before continuing on. It's another 25 minutes to our destination: Tubu Tree Camp. This will be our home for the next two nights.

Cedrick welcomes us and loads us (and our luggage) into another of these ubiquitous Range Rover safari vehicles. We drive down to where a few wild dogs are hanging out. There's only three dogs plus a single pup. Cedrick explains that this small group of wild dogs split off from a larger pack (a more properly sized group) and have been on their own since. A female gave birth to the normal 12 or 13 pups but due to the pack's small size they can't feed everyone and pups were lost. It's also hard to protect everyone and more pups were lost. Now they're down to just one remaining pup. We'll see.

On the drive to the camp proper, Cedrick stops and explains to us how things are going to be. Given that we're coming from a safari camp, it's old hat. The times and activities are the same with the same names. Wake, Eat, Safari drive (with morning break), lunch, hang, tea, safari drive, sundowner, dinner. No walking alone after dark, yada, yada.

At the camp we're met by the whole crew. They sing and dance for us. We're greeted, hands are shaken, names are exchanged. We get the lawyer-talk and sign the release papers. We enjoy a delicious lunch. There are people at three tables, and we meet some of our fellow safari compatriots. One other table are from Austin, about 1/2 a mile from where Tricia and Don live. Wow.

We're introduced to our room. It's really impressive. At least as nice as the last place. May be better. This'll do. We hang and chill and wait for the 3:30 pm tea and 4pm afternoon drive with our guide, Stan.

Our first stop on the drive is to visit a leopard mom, with two young, who had killed a warthog two days prior. She's tried to take it up high but it was heavy and kept falling. As we arrive the carcass is wedged between two trunks of a tall tree. The kids eat and play with mom. Everyone's full and tired.

Next we look for some lions rumored to be in the area. They elude us for a while, but then Don see them and we're set. They, too, ate recently and are full and tired. It's warm and the lady lions, to cool off, lay on their backs with their white underside facing skyward too let the heat out.

For our Sundowner (happy hour and snacks while we watch the sunset) we're beside the river. We watch a huge hippo navigating down it, keeping the channel open for other animals. Stan (Stanley), our guide here, give us his back story, including doing a promotional video for nature conservation tourism. The president of the country asked him to do it and he's understandably proud of that.

Back at camp we prepare for dinner. Unbeknownst to us, twice a week there's a special meal and here, tonight's the night. We eat around a camp fire, with food warmed by the coals of the fire. There's singing and dancing. It's quite the spectacle and great fun.

Photos



One last breakfast in the pre-dawn darkness at Chitabe.



It's a cold morning and we're bundled with our warm (hot?) bush babies (hot water bottles) in our laps. Driving so quickly really gets the wind chill going.



Why racing so fast? Trying to keep up with a big pack of wild dogs hot on the scent of... something. Eventually whatever it was gets away and the dogs take a breather. Bring up the rear? A friend, a hyena.



Following tracks in the sand we find three lion cubs, waiting semi-patiently for mom. When bored (always) they rough house and find sticks to play with. We're something to look at, too.



A female osterich doing her best to get the amorous attentions of her male. To no avail. Not sure what she's supposed to look like... maybe ground crew on an airport taxiway guiding a plane in to it's gate?



Keeping with our luck in finding both live and long dead animals Ant finds a Kudu's horns. Animals with antlers shed them annually. None on this continent. These are all "horns".



This little guy, with his short horns, is a steenbok. He's small and is either solitary (or when the mood strikes him, part of a couple). When in danger of being eaten he curls into a ball and says "Nothing to see here, I'm just a rock".



Whoa, what's that thing on top of that tree? That is a Secretary bird couple. Quite rare.



Morning break time. Smell the flowers (pee) and have coffee.



We're about to fly out, so a group photo with Ant.



At the air strip we have to try to scare a big elephant into moving a bit further from the actual runway. In turn he (she) roars and shakes it's head. In the process a big cloud of dust erupts. We win and the Ellie (as they're called) saunters further away.



Look over there! It's a moma lion with a cub in her mouth. She's moving the cub to a new locale.



Flying to Tubu Tree Camp, the sights underscored that we're headed to a wetter part of the Okavango Delta.



Small plane, but not too small. Here's where we landed. A mixed family of wild dogs and one hyena were there to greet us. Small family. Too small to support/defend all of the pups that a female wild dog will produce in a single litter, sadly.



Greetings and singing as we arrived at Tubu. Such welcoming and friendly people. They do this week in and week out year round but seem genuine and happy.



The indoor/outdoor dining room overlooks a huge field, part wet, part dry. The animals really gravitate to it during the day. Lovely viewing.



Fancier food here. Curry pidillo (sp?).
Delicious. You won't get thin staying at
these kinds of places.



Karen checking out the pool.



Our room. So nice, but be careful of your toes going around that bed.



FARNSNIENTE



Cubs and their meal for the next few days: a warthog wedged between the base of two trees. After it gets lighter (being eaten) mom will haul it higher up, out of harm's way. It'll be easier to defend.



Satiated for now, mom and one of the cubs socialize. They're wearing matching PJs.





So many cats here. I think this is a male (wink).



A female lion who thinks it's too hot out. Solution? Lay on her back and let the breeze cool her tummy. They apparently teach this to all of the cats in these parts.



Time for sundowner (cocktails and snacks at sunset). A big hippo in the background is keeping the channel clear. Stan (Stanley) is telling us one of his long stories in animated, local fashion.



Back at camp, more food. This time served fire-side, post drinks. Crouch down to serve yourself, but be careful not to fall into the fire.

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