

Kichaka

- Name

Kichaka Lodge

- Comfort: (rating/premium/boutique luxury)

5-Star Luxury Sanctuary by the Waterhole

- Max. Guest amount

20

- Highlights

Where Luxury Meets the Wild

Kichaka Lodge is a luxurious five-star retreat within the Lalibela Wildlife Reserve, constructed from natural stone and thatch to harmonise with its surroundings. It features a large waterhole frequented by an array of wildlife, including hippos and elephants. The lodge showcases a modern blend of safari and colonial decor, creating a timeless and comfortable atmosphere.

- Main or Central hotel facilities

Nestled harmoniously within the natural landscape, Kichaka Lodge is a luxurious five-star retreat built with natural stone and thatch, seamlessly blending into its serene surroundings. The lodge's décor combines modern style with traditional safari charm and colonial elegance, creating a warm, timeless atmosphere of comfort and sophistication.

Guests can unwind at the sociable cocktail bar and lounge area, which open onto a spacious viewing deck—perfect for taking in the breathtaking surroundings. Dining options include an elegant indoor dining room or a relaxed outdoor setting, with fireside dinners under the stars in the boma available on select evenings, weather permitting.

The rim-flow swimming pool, perched on the edge of the main deck, appears to flow directly into the nearby waterhole, often visited by wildlife. Above the pool, the spa offers floor-to-ceiling panoramic views, providing a tranquil space to watch game while enjoying rejuvenating treatments. Guests can also stay active in the well-equipped gym.

Additional amenities include Wi-Fi access throughout the main lodge areas, and laundry services are available at an additional charge, ensuring convenience and comfort for all guests.

- Guest accommodation

Kichaka offers ten luxurious suites that reflect the refined style and elegance of the main lodge, designed for ultimate comfort and immersion in the surrounding bush. Each suite features indulgent bathrooms with free-standing bathtubs, spacious indoor and outdoor showers, and his-and-her basins. Guests also enjoy a private deck with a heated plunge pool, an in-room coffee station, safe, and complimentary Wi-Fi.

The three water-facing suites are styled in the same luxurious manner as the main lodge, with elegant décor and high-end finishes. Bathrooms are fitted with free-standing baths, rain showers, and double vanities, and each suite includes a private deck with a heated plunge pool and outdoor shower, offering uninterrupted views over the waterhole. Room amenities include extra-length king-size beds dressed in Percale cotton linen, air conditioning, tea and coffee making facilities, fully stocked mini-bars, and hair dryers.

The seven bush-facing suites are equally luxurious, with bathrooms featuring enormous baths, rain shower heads, and his-and-hers basins. Each suite has a private deck with a heated plunge pool and outdoor shower, designed to maximize the sense of being fully immersed in the bush. Room amenities mirror those of the water-facing suites, ensuring consistency in comfort, convenience, and luxury across all accommodations

- Food & drink

Kichaka offers a variety of relaxed and memorable dining experiences with a focus on 5-star, à la carte fine dining. Guests can enjoy exquisite meals crafted to order, featuring locally inspired and international cuisine, served in the elegant main dining area or in thoughtfully arranged outdoor settings.

The lodge also features a fully stocked bar, offering a range of inclusive local beverages, with premium drinks available at an additional cost, allowing guests to unwind and enjoy their preferred refreshments throughout their stay under the African sky.

- Safari & activities

Your stay includes two guided game drives per day, offering the opportunity to fully experience the wildlife and landscapes of the bush. The morning drive sets out at first light, when the reserve awakens and animals are most active, while the afternoon drive continues into the early evening, providing the chance to witness breathtaking sunsets and increased wildlife movement.

For guests wishing to enhance their safari experience, a variety of additional activities are available at an extra cost. These include an exciting Big 5 walking safari, guided bush walks that reveal the smaller details of the wilderness on foot, and thrilling night drives to encounter the reserve's fascinating nocturnal wildlife. Guests can also enjoy catch-and-release fishing excursions, offering a peaceful and relaxing way to spend time in nature.

A truly unique experience at Kichaka is the Cosmic Safari, where guests can immerse themselves in the night sky of the African bush, learning about constellations, planets, and celestial phenomena while surrounded by the sounds of the wilderness—a magical way to combine stargazing with the safari experience.

Please speak to your guide upon arrival to learn more about these activities and to arrange bookings during your stay

- Animals

Lalibela Game Reserve is home to a rich and diverse array of wildlife, offering classic African safari sightings across its malaria-free wilderness.

Big Five

You can encounter all of Africa's iconic Big Five species roaming freely in the reserve:

Lion

Elephant

White rhinoceros

Buffalo

Leopard (though sightings can be more elusive)

Other Large Mammals

In addition to the Big Five, the reserve supports a wide variety of other wildlife, including:

Cheetah
Hyena
Hippo
Giraffe
Zebra
Warthog

Various antelope species such as impala, wildebeest, eland, kudu, bushbuck, and blesbok

Smaller & Nocturnal Species

On night drives or with expert guides you may also see:

Jackal
Lynx
Bat-eared fox
Aardvark
Aardwolf
Springhare
Blue duiker and rock hyrax

Birdlife

The reserve is also rich in birdlife, with numerous species flourishing across the varied habitats spread over its ecosystems.

All of these animals roam freely throughout the reserve, creating an authentic and immersive safari experience.

○ Position

Kichaka is beautifully situated within the Lalibela Wildlife Reserve, offering guests a luxurious and private safari retreat immersed in pristine wilderness. The lodge's elevated position provides panoramic views of the surrounding bush and waterholes, allowing guests to observe wildlife from the comfort of their suites, decks, and main lodge areas.

○ Climate & best time to travel

Lalibela Wildlife Reserve enjoys a temperate, malaria-free climate, making it ideal for year-round safari experiences. The region generally experiences warm summers (November to March) with occasional afternoon showers, which bring lush green landscapes and thriving wildlife. Winters (May to September) are cooler and drier, offering crisp mornings and clear skies, which make wildlife easier to spot as animals gather around water sources.

The best time to visit is during the summer months, from November to March, when the warmer temperatures and occasional afternoon showers bring lush green landscapes and abundant wildlife activity. This season offers vibrant scenery and the opportunity to experience the reserve at its most alive, with dramatic skies and a lively bushveld atmosphere.

However, the reserve's scenery and wildlife remain captivating throughout the year, offering a different but equally rewarding experience in every season.

○ Arrival (how best to get there but provide all options e.g. flights, road transfer)

Kichaka Lodge is located within the Lalibela Wildlife Reserve in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. There are several convenient ways to reach the reserve, depending on your preferences for travel style and comfort:

Fly to Port Elizabeth Airport (PLZ)

This is the most popular and efficient option for most national and international travellers:

Port Elizabeth Airport (PLZ) is approximately 104 km (about 1 hour 20 minutes' drive) from Kichaka Lodge.

Please note that Kichaka Lodge has a separate entrance and not the main entrance on the N2.

From the airport you can choose one of the following onward options:

Self-Drive / Hire Car

Rent a car at Port Elizabeth Airport upon arrival.

Drive along the N2 National Highway toward Grahamstown (Makhanda).

After passing the Lalibela Game Reserve main entrance, watch for the Kichaka Lodge road sign on your left-hand side, approximately 13 km after the Lalibela main entrance.

Turn off the N2 onto the access road and continue for about 3 km on dirt/gravel road until you reach the Kichaka Lodge entrance on your left.

GPS link via Google Maps for Kichaka: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/kFsFQKdpP3Mum6Gm8>

Note: The access road is not fully tarred but is accessible with a standard vehicle, making the drive straightforward and scenic.

Private Transfer

Arrange a private transfer in advance through our trusted partner transfer company.

A comfortable transfer vehicle and driver will meet you at the airport and take you directly to the reception area — ideal for guests who prefer not to drive.

Road Travel from Major Cities

For guests driving from within South Africa:

From Port Elizabeth (Gqeberha): Follow the N2 National Highway north toward Grahamstown (Makhanda).

After passing the Lalibela Game Reserve main entrance, look for the Kichaka Lodge road sign on your left-hand side, approximately 13 km after the Lalibela entrance. Turn onto the access road and continue for about 3 km on dirt/gravel road to the lodge entrance.

From Grahamstown (Makhanda): Drive south on the N2 toward Port Elizabeth. After passing the Lalibela Game Reserve main entrance, keep an eye out for the Kichaka Lodge road sign on your left-hand side, about 13 km past the main entrance, then follow the 3 km dirt/gravel access road to the lodge.

From East London: Take the N2 west toward Port Elizabeth. Follow directions to the Lalibela Game Reserve main entrance, then continue to the Kichaka Lodge road sign, approximately 13 km beyond the main entrance, and proceed 3 km on the dirt/gravel road to reach the lodge.

Important Arrival Information

Check-in is from 12:00 to 13:00, as lunch is served at 13:00.

Please let us know your anticipated arrival time so that we can prepare for your arrival and ensure that transfers are coordinated smoothly.

- Children

Please note that Kichaka Lodge has an age restriction and only accommodates guests aged 14 years and older.

- Health (e.g. Malaria area or Malaria-free)

Lalibela Wildlife Reserve is a malaria-free area, making it a safe destination for families and travellers without the need for anti-malarial medication.

- Security (e.g. full fenced Safari Lodge, or 24-hour reception/guest services)

Lalibela Wildlife Reserve and Kichaka Lodge prioritize guest safety and peace of mind. The lodge is situated within a fully fenced private reserve and is itself fully enclosed, with all access points carefully controlled to ensure a secure environment for guests.

On-site staff are available to assist guests throughout the day, and there is 24-hour guest services and response for any needs or concerns.

- Accessibility (e.g. Wheelchair friendly)

Please note that Kichaka Lodge is not wheelchair-friendly or accessible, as there are steps in and around the main lodge as well as within the suites, making it unsuitable for guests requiring mobility assistance.

- Operator (e.g. family-owned)

Private owner