

# The Zulu Nyala Safari Game Lodge: A true hidden gem in KZN

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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As more and more South Africans look within our beautiful country for that perfect getaway, more and more 'gems' are revealed. One such gem is tucked away in the far north of KwaZulu-Natal and nestled in hundreds of acres of wilderness. The Zulu Nyala Safari Game Lodge has much to offer for complete rest and rejuvenation to recharge those batteries.



## Steeped in History

It all began in May 1981, when the late Trevor Shaw bought a remote 15,500-acre piece of the wilderness area. Shaw named the property Zulu Nyala, after the predominant culture of the area and the beautiful but shy Nyala buck, which are plentiful in this area but rare elsewhere in the country. Shaw started construction of a 'gentlemen's camp', an exclusive 12-room thatch and stone on top of a hill, offering a beautiful view that overlooked the vast expanse of wilderness that is home to over 40 different animal species.

## I Dreamed of Africa

A good few years ago, the film crew of *I Dreamed of Africa* saw the lodge while scouting the area and knew that it was the perfect 'set' for the filming of the movie, which was the first of six movies to be filmed on the premises of Zulu Nyala.



**Are you game for a drive?**

One of the highlights of our stay at the lodge was the late afternoon safari two-hour drive. We set out around 3pm under the watchful guidance of the very knowledgeable guide, Welcome. We spotted a plethora of buck, buffalo, giraffe and wildebeest. Also spotted were three elephants and a few horned rhinos. There are a few cheetahs in the area but we did not spot any on this occasion. They call it the ‘big four’ as Welcome pointed out that there are no lions in this wilderness.

But a chance to have a life-changing encounter to get up close and personal with these gentle African giants. You can step beyond the barriers between man and beast and you will be in awe of Africa’s largest mammal. Simply gratifying and just majestic to watch these large elephants as they forage for leaves.



**Plenty to do**



You can choose to laze around the pool sipping cocktails or engage in the other activities. There's horse riding for those who enjoy being in the saddle; this is a great way to view the African bush and is an exhilarating ride. Also on offer is a beach ride during low tide, which is normally very early in the morning at St Lucia, which is about 45km away. Other activities include whale watching (from June to November), deep-sea fishing at either St Lucia or Sodwana Bay (pre-booking a must), tiger fishing on request at the Jozini Dam (from August to May), scuba diving and snorkelling (Sodwana), pineapple farming as well as the crocodile and snake centre, which is a sanctuary to some of the world's largest snakes and the St Lucia Hippo and Crocodile tour.

The nearby town of Hluhluwe is known for pineapple farming; approximately 80% of SA's pineapples are grown and exported to the rest of the world from this area.

There is plenty to do at the lodge or in its immediate surroundings!

## Fine dining

As Hindus, our dining preferences were limited but taken care of by Chef Leonard Dlomo, who has excellent culinary skills. On the first night, we experienced a three-course meal with the highlight being the North Indian chicken curry with sambals and poppadoms. On the second night, Chef Dlomo surprised us with grilled lamb chops; there was also fish available. So most, if not all, tastes are superbly taken care of.



Vinodh Haripersad is the acting lodge manager, and his knowledge of the entire complex is astounding. Once you are in his more than capable hands, you know that you are set for an amazing time at the lodge. He will go out of his way to ensure that you are comfortable during your stay there.

The lodge is situated about 10km from Hluhluwe and is about a three-hour drive from Durban. Relax in the comfort of your beautifully appointed room or bask by the poolside in the sun, top off the day with refreshing cocktails from the comfort of the lodge's balcony as a legendary African sunset unfolds. Come as a guest, leave as a friend.

For more info go to [zulunyala.co.za](http://zulunyala.co.za)

## ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

Naresh Maharaj is a petrol head who loves cars and writing about them. He is also a Member of the SA Guild of Motoring Journalists. Naresh is also an international sports correspondent and an acclaimed corporate MC and voice-over artist. Naresh is a sports/news producer for community radio stations and also an award-winning sports journalist. Contact Naresh on [nmaharaj321@gmail.com](mailto:nmaharaj321@gmail.com).

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