



NEWSLETTER

February 2010



Firstly, I would like to wish you all a very happy new year.

Siankaba's guests experienced a wonderful festive period with many celebrations to see in 2010. Bonnie and I are thoroughly looking forward to a fantastic year ahead with many exciting innovations being introduced this year (we will let you know more as the year progresses!).

As I am sure everyone is aware the worldwide recession has obviously affected our business but this has allowed us to work extremely hard on staff development. We are extremely aware of the importance of unrivalled service and thought you may like to see some of the recent comments that we have received from guests staying in December and January:

"Everything was excellent; food, room, people and the atmosphere, much better than we expected, I would recommend it to anyone"

Debbie & Hilary – Australia

"We have had the best service and warmest welcome at Siankaba, better than anywhere we've been in world. The food is excellent, everyone is knowledgeable and helpful and the atmosphere is a perfect mix of peace and relaxation in the lodge and the excitement of the excursions"

Tracy & Chris Leary – Scotland

"Thank you words can not do it justice. Had a great time, this place feels like "home". There is nothing that could be done to improve our holiday. Views from the outside bed are amazing."

Paul & Vic Codihan – England

"Our stay at this Garden of Eden was far too short, but the perfect ending to a truly marvelous African adventure. The attentiveness of the staff, the beautiful accommodations and the savory cuisines were all top notch."

Susan Richardson – USA

"In many years of wandering this world; Siankaba will always remain my favorite place"

Graham & Caroline Potgieter – Australia

The assurance of all of our staff, managers and Directors go out to all future guests that they will encounter unrivalled service in the coming year.

NEW LODGE MANAGERS

We are proud to inform you that Bonnie and I have appointed new managers at the lodge. Jennie and Pete joined us in early December for a handover from the out going managers and have been running the lodge since 20th December. They have settled in really well with the team at the lodge and the guest feedback has been simply stunning. We wish them the very best of luck and are convinced they will 'go the extra mile' to make a guests stay something very special. You will see from the below that they have a wealth of experience and can certainly ensure that all our guests have an unforgettable stay.

Peter Bartosz

Aged 50, Pete was born and raised in Lusaka, went to school in Zimbabwe and then on to agricultural college in South Africa. Since Pete's family farmed in Zambia, he grew up with a profound interest in wildlife and the different species in the bush. He has gained a lot of knowledge of the birds, reptiles, and mammals that occur in Southern Africa. Pete and his partner Jennie have spent the last eight years in Tanzania managing Kikoti Lodge for the African Conservancy Company. Kikoti is a 4 star lodge that sleeps eighteen guests; it borders the Terangire National Park. Pete did some personal guiding with many clients there along with the normal responsibility of lodge management. He and Jennie left Tanzania as they felt that they wanted to come home to Zambia and look for a new challenge. Pete has invaluable knowledge of vehicle, building and boat maintenance that has been honed after 20 years of working in the bush; he is thoroughly looking forward to improving the standards at Islands of Siankaba.



Jennifer Kenney (Pete's partner for 11 years)

Aged 52, Jen was born and lived in the Livingstone/ Mulobezi area for her first thirteen years, until her parents moved to Zimbabwe. When she left school, she went to college and did a bookkeeping course and after that joined Kariba Ferries and hosted the clients on the boats that plied Lake Kariba. Since then she has worked in many lodges in Zimbabwe, South Africa (Mabula Lodge), Zambia (Kafunta River Lodge) and Tanzania (Wild Africa and Kikoti). Jenni has a flair for interior design and prides herself on innovative food and beverage presentation and service and is looking forward to 'getting creative' at Islands of Siankaba.

NEW AIRLINE



**NOW FLYING FROM JOBURG INTO LIVINGSTONE AIRPORT FOUR TIMES A WEEK:
SUNDAY, MONDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY.**

UKUCHINA BOMA

We introduced the Ukuchina Boma to you all in our last newsletter and I am sure you will remember that this is the custom made massage suite that we completed last year. This building allows us to perform pampering massages for clients. The range of special Zambian treatments that we have on offer has certainly caught the eye of the International Press recently and we have had a number of different articles published:

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH (UK) – 26 January 2010

“Only locally sourced ingredients are used in the spa in this treetop lodge – hidden in jungle on two islands in the Zambezi River. The majestic Zambezi facial uses anthill mud (bought up from deep underground, this mud is extremely fine so it exfoliates skin very gently), coarse ground mealie-meal to cleanse and rice to soften and moisturize. Access to the spa is along a raised wooden walkway, which only adds to the magical, other-worldly experience.”

SPA SECRETS MAGAZINE (UK) – Winter 2009/10

“The Ukuchina Boma at Islands of Siankaba takes its name from healing massage. Taking indigenous remedies to the extreme, therapists follow Zambian traditions. The best bit is telling your friends that your healthy new glow came courtesy of the walls of an ants nest!”

GOOGLE EARTH

I thought it might be of interest to everyone to see the islands as Google Earth sees them:



Should you be interested in finding the islands yourself on Google Earth their coordinates are: **17 50'06.00S 25 34'28.74E** Please also note that I have uploaded some marketing photos over the islands (please ensure you have enabled the Panoramic feature on Google Earth) as this is a great way for guests to have a look at where they are coming to before they travel!

SIANKABA NURSERY SCHOOL

We are wonderfully proud to announce that we have completed the construction of the community nursery school in conjunction with **The U Foundation**. The school comprises of two classrooms and a teachers house. It has been fully equipped and has running water, solar power and ablution facilities. The head master Malindi Lubinda (an ex employee of the lodge that was sponsored through teachers training college) has now moved into his house and is running classes very successfully. We currently have a volunteer out from the UK who will be working with Malindi for the next couple of months. We have also had a number of guests who have very kindly volunteered their precious time on holiday to assist at the school.



We are in the process of producing a detailed web site on the school so that guests can monitor what is happening at the school. The school volunteer is busy looking at a sponsor a child project and then combining this with children's profiles and progress being updated on the site! Watch this space for new developments.



We would like to think that we will welcome back many friends to come and see the Nursery school this coming year – it has certainly been a great team effort and particular thanks must go to all those people who had very sore backsides after cycling from London to Paris to raise funds for this school. It would not have been possible without their very hard work. A special mention must also go to Sarah Elton and Jay Taylor at the U Foundation who have really put their life and souls into this community initiative.

So, that is it from the Siankaba team until next time.

Tsalani Bwino ('Stay well' in the Nyanja language)

Simon Wilde

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