

Picnicking with pachyderms



By [Brian Berkman](#)

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Adrian Gardiner's vision to buy up farms in the Eastern Cape near Port Elizabeth has resulted in Shamwari, a 20,000ha big-five reserve that is also malaria-free.



There are lodges to meet most tastes. For instance, Riverdene is exclusively for families with children under 12, while Long Lee Manor is designed for a colonial experience, Eagles Crag for contemporary design ethic and Bayethe tented camp, where we stayed, for those wanting a bush experience.

All accommodations at Shamwari meet five-star lodge standards, but the experience of living in the bush with just canvas sides (there is a thatched roof above) separating nature and guest is thrilling. Although the individual lodges are fenced in and about an hour's journey from the big five, there are monkey and antelope species not to mention abundant birdlife that roam in and around the tents which overlook a waterhole.

With three-hour game drives in the morning and afternoon and sumptuous daily meals, there isn't a lot of time available just to sit quietly and absorb the environment. I'd recommend skipping a drive or two to take in the majesty of the bush or, do as we did, and asked our ranger for a bush picnic to watch the sun go down and bright evening stars rise. The game roam free here and sometimes remain in the thicket. Although we were disappointed we didn't see lions (especially after another group did) we were enveloped by a herd of elephants which was scarily exciting until they passed wind. Find out more at <http://www.shamwari.com> +27 (0) 41 407 1000.

Courtesy: [GQ Magazine](#)

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