

Take time out for a trip to Tau

 By [Brian Berkman](#)

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There is, of course, the legend of the lost Kruger Millions but even that tenuous link to great stories suggests the gold bullion is somewhere near Machadadorp and not hidden beneath a lion's den in The Kruger National Park.



A lion doing what he does best... Leaving it to the female to do the hunting.

Madikwe, on the other hand, has great legends. Herman Charles Bosman enlivened the Great Marico River with his characters like Oom Schalk Lourens for many South African school goers when his books were prescribed school reading and I could easily imagine him speaking directly to me while seeing the fat moon over the Abjaterskop.

While bouncing on the back of a Tau game drive vehicle our guide is pointing to the thunder clouds overhead says lightening strikes the reserve more than elsewhere because of the rich iron deposits in the rock. Nearby Thabazimbi means Iron Mountain in local dialect and before the area was proclaimed a reserve, tin, and ore

mining along with farming were its main source of income.

Game for Africa

Madikwe Game Reserve is currently the country's fourth largest at 720km². It is situated in the North West Province and is bordered by Botswana in the north, the Dwaarsberg Mountains to the south and Marico river to the east. Ten thousand animals of 27 major species, including wild dog, cheetah, lion, white and black rhino, buffalo and elephant, have been re-introduced to the Madikwe Game Reserve over a six-year period.

Tau is situated away from the river which means that game, especially in the dry season, congregates around the man-made watering spots around which Tau is built. At Tau you are likely to see everything you'd like to from the windows of your room or from the wide deck built as an overhang over the water. I've never been to a lodge where so many animals have come within stroking distance of the lodge.

Not only is Madikwe Malaria-free but its diverse acacia, savannah and riverine habitats attract the most spectacular collection of birds: Kori bustard, White Stork, Double-banded Courser, Burchell's Courser, Pied Babbler among the often seen 210 bird species out of the known 313 species recorded here to date.



All aboard for wildest Africa...

Do you take...

Tau accommodates up to 60 guests in 30 air-conditioned chalets which makes it among the largest lodge in the area. They were upgrading the already swish-looking conference facilities when we visited and as we walked around the outdoor dining boma, exclusively reserved for weddings and events at the conference centre that can host up to 150 people, I could imagine how dramatic a wedding in the bush might be with local choirs and drummers proclaiming the couple. I had a foretaste of this as I celebrated my birthday while there and the staff choir serenaded me.

Tau, along with nearby Rhulani Lodge, also hosts Rovos Rail passengers on their safari journey through the area and because of the proximity to Gabarone many multinational business and government meetings are hosted here.

Drawbacks when compared to smaller lodges is that the standard rooms are smaller than usual for game reserve stays but



... After which you can relax in the comfort of your suite.

comfortable and expansive it needn't detract from the experience. All showers are outside in a rock enclosure which is lovely in the summer but may mean you'd prefer to bath in winter.

Bring the kids along

Young children are well catered for: Those under three stay free in their parent's room while those between three and five pay a nominal fee. The Tau Cubz Club for children offers activities and game-drives away from dangerous animals.

It is worth noting that many lodges will not permit young children or pregnant women on game drives as animals, elephants and cats chiefly among them, respond differently when they can hear or smell those vulnerable.

There are two fabulous family suites on either end of the horseshoe at Tau and I'd recommend you try to book a room as near to room one as you can as this is where the best game viewing from your private deck will be.

As someone on a limited diet I felt very well taken care of at Tau and was very impressed with the interesting selection of salads - a departure from the traditional game-lodge fare. They serve breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and dinner at Tau and these are included in your rate.



Up close... but not too personal.

Espresso-based beverages and all alcohol and cool drinks are extra.

For more information contact Tau Game Lodge at: Phone +27 (0) 11 314 4350/49 fax +27 (0) 11 314 1162; email taugame@mweb.co.za and view at www.taugamelodge.co.za.

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