

## Getaway choose Maputaland Bush Camp

The best summer spots according to Getaway Magazine staffers.

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Maputaland Bush Camp, KZN, chosen as top destination by Khumo Ntoane

The northern part of Maputaland appears uncharted and vast. The landscape folds, elevates and flattens out. It's abundantly vegetated with swamp forests and wetlands. It has lakes, rivers and a rich coastline. The attractions in this magical space are simple; it's a wonderland to anyone with an active imagination. This rustic slice of the past is doing its bit to keep the 21st century at bay.

The camp is on a hill overlooking a hippo pool, 16 kays south of Kosi Bay. Owners Willie and Isabella Labuschagne lived in a tent for six months while they built the camp themselves. Their aim was to have as little impact on the natural surroundings as possible.

The bush camp sleeps 10 to 14 people. En suite huts are made from reeds and thatch. The watersaving shower among the trees is rudimentary. To operate it, you pour buckets of water into a sack-like contraption with a shower head before hoisting it into a tree with a pulley. Solar panels generate power for lights in the evening and gas is used for cooking.

The sound of a vehicle is rare and you need a 4x4 to get there. The Labuschagnes have a stable full of horses for exploring the area. Fishers collect their catches in mekoro and in the elaborate fish traps at Kosi Bay. Reeds are harvested along the edges of the lakes and the fields hoed.

This is a great hiking destination, with only hippos posing some danger. The animals tend to be shy, but there are plenty of birds to be seen. Canoeing on the Siyadla River, well-fed crocodiles surface with calm precision. As one paddler said, 'Even the crocodiles are happy in Maputaland.'

The locals like to refer to this corner of the country as paradise – and I have to agree.

Tel 072-727-3079 or e-mail mail or web <http://www.maputaland.net>.