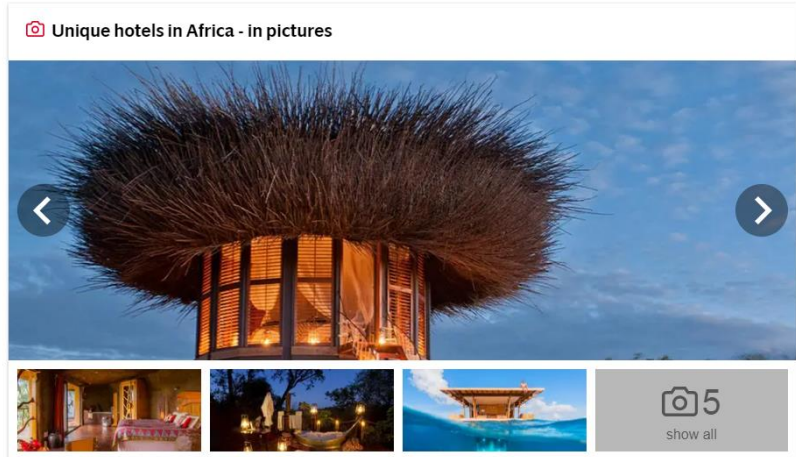


Lifestyle > Travel

5 remarkable and unique hotels in Africa: from Botswana to Namibia

When looking for a luxury escape to Africa with a difference, look to the sub-Saharan, says Francesca Lynagh

FRANCESCA LYNAGH | Thursday 4 January 2018 16:57 | 0 comments



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Cape Town may well be full of funky boutique hotels, the Masai Mara does indeed boast a host of tented lodges, and there's no doubt that the riads of **Marrakech** are a delight to behold.

But when it comes to the more unusual places to rest your head in the world, it's sub-Saharan Africa in particular that holds plenty of trump cards.

From open-air sleeping to underwater snoozing, here's a selection of Africa's most remarkable stays.

1. Sky beds and star baths at Baines' Camp, Botswana



(Supplied)

Botswana has found itself in the limelight ever since the couple of the moment, **Prince Harry and Meghan Markle**, escaped there for their third date.

There are plenty of exclusive lodges fit for royalty, but one of the most intimate camps in the country is Baines' Camp, perched on the Moremi Game



Reserve in the Okavango Delta. And it's the sleeping arrangements here that make this lodge all the more enticing. Each of the five suites features a bed with wheels, which can be rolled out onto your private wooden deck as the sun goes down. Welcome to your "sky bed." With the sounds of the Boro River, and all of its inhabitants, providing the soundtrack to your evening, cuddle up and spend a magical night gazing at the star-splattered African sky.

Not only that, but your suite's very own "star bath," provides the perfect opportunity to indulge in an al-fresco bubble bath to remember.

sanctuaryretreats.com/botswana-camps-baines



2. A luxury cave at Antbear Lodge, South Africa



(Supplied)

Neatly carved into the side of a hill, just on the outskirts of South Africa's famous Drakensberg Mountains, lies a luxury cave with panoramic views across rolling fields.

The cave itself boasts an old school fireplace in one corner, a sizeable jacuzzi bath in the other, and a whole screen of floor to ceiling glass separating you from the outside elements. Perhaps the most intriguing part of the cave is the section of quirky wooden creations in every nook of the room — the wardrobe, safe mechanism, and even the fusebox have been intricately handcrafted by the owners.

A private wooden deck wraps itself around the perimeter of the cave, making the perfect spot to soak up some South African rays. Then, after a hard day's hike up to the top of Giant's Castle mountain peak, hunker down in the secluded luxury cave, and enjoy a cosy night's sleep.

antbear.co.za/

3. A hotel floating on the Chobe River, Namibia



(Supplied)

You could stay in a tented lodge in the Chobe National Park, or even better, you could book into one of the Chobe Princess vessels, a boutique houseboat which sits on the body of water separating Namibia and Botswana.

With only a few rooms aboard each of the three floating properties, guests get to experience water-based safaris instead of being jostled around in the back of a Land Cruiser all day. Spend some time cruising along the Chobe River looking out for elephants coming to drink from the water, or try your hand at fishing from one of the smaller excursion dinghies.

Guests of the Chobe Princess will still get to experience all that the Chobe National Park has to offer, but from a unique viewpoint.

zqcollection.com/chobe-princesses

4. The Underwater Room at the Manta Resort, Pemba Island, Tanzania



(Supplied)

Taking it one step further is The Manta Resort on Pemba Island, just a stone's throw from Zanzibar. A room floating on the stunning turquoise water wasn't quite enough for them, so they created a three-floored suite, featuring an underwater level which houses the bedroom.

5. The Bird Nest Room at the Segera Retreat, Kenya



(Supplied)

Recently opened, the Bird Nest at the Segera Retreat in Kenya has proven itself to be a big hit with those craving an African experience like no other. The lucky occupants of the innovative structure made from raw local materials, will get to enjoy a private bedroom perched in the treetops with 360-degree views of the Laikipia landscape, but that's not all. After the day's game viewing is over, guests are given the chance to get even closer to nature by sleeping in the open air atop the nest. Laid out on the top deck will be a freshly prepared bed, stocked with hot water bottles to snuggle up to when the air temperature drops. All that will keep you awake at night is the magical sound of the roaming wildlife down below.

segera.com/nay-palad-bird-nest/

Francesca Lynagh is a freelance news and lifestyle journalist. You can find her on her [website](#) or [Instagram](#). ■