

Unique game viewing with Gondwana's new mountain bike trails

 By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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I've experienced my fair share of diverse game reserves and game drives over the years, however a recent stay at the Gondwana Game Reserve on South Africa's Garden Route, just four hours out of Cape Town, offered the most unique game viewing experience yet; upon two wheels and through the handle bars of a mountain bike.



The mountain bike trail experience was introduced earlier this year and offers a variety of trail lengths and difficulty ratings, from easy to advanced, with the hire of the mountain bikes complimentary to all guests.

Biking amongst Bok

Obviously, the game on offer for the bike trails is of the herbivore and less threatening kind, such as Bontebok, Cape Mountain Zebra, Giraffe, Eland and Impala. No added incentive for a speedy pedal as the free roaming elephant, rhino, hippo and most importantly lions seen in the rest of the 11,000-hectare reserve are not included in the mountain bike trail section.



My fiancé and I recently started mountain biking – read that as mainly pushing our bikes up the steep inclines and white knuckling it down the declines – so felt we could attempt the Blue Route; an intermediate route of 8.62km of dirt roads and jeep tracks with a healthy mix of steep and rocky ups and downs. We were warned it would be tough, and it was, yet the exhilaration of hurtling down the hills, whizzing through fragrant fynbos and gently rolling past a herd of zebra made up for the thigh burning, incline cursing sections.



Zoom for Zebra! #zebra #GondwanaGameReserve

#Gondwana #rainbow #biking #mountainbiking #gamereservesouthafrica #gamereserve

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...antly flat dirt roads, while the Green and Orange routes, at 10.4 and 12.4 km respectively, should really only be attempted if experienced and fit.

Game viewing on a bike really let's you feel in tune with your surroundings – less a touristy voyeur and more part of the

scenery. Burning off some calories is an added bonus, in fact, I greatly enjoyed being active as the way of life at many game reserves tends to be fairly sedentary, with seated game drives and three-course dining as the main activities.







To do list: relax

That said, if you are just looking for pure sedate relaxation, Gondwana is the perfect place to reboot. Morning and afternoon game drives are inclusive for all guests, yet between those, one is really just left to one's own relaxing devices. Lazy brunching and lunching, napping, working on your tan by the infinity pool or a trip to the tented spa are the only order of business if you so desire.

We stayed in the Kwena Lodge which houses 14 free standing domed suites, modelled on the traditional Khoi-San dwelling. The décor is tasteful African chic and includes; a stove fireplace, a unique skylight above the bed for star gazing before you nod off and a modern open plan bathroom. A walk-in shower and deep Jacuzzi-like bath (which we could use! No drought restrictions here) with views of the rolling hills and grasslands of the reserve really contributed to the luxurious and exotic vibe.



Image sourced from www.gondwanagr.co.za

Elephants, and even lions, are known to pay a visit to the lodges from time-to-time, so the staff insist on escorting guests from their rooms to the different dining or bar areas at night. Unfortunately, (or fortunately) the lions eluded us at the lodge and on the game drives, however we did spot elephant, rhino, many buck, zebra and two curious hippos just strolling along the dirt road.



All in all a wonderfully relaxing and recharging nature filled weekend. I 10/10 recommend.







Half Board rates start from R2,195 per person and include breakfast, afternoon tea and a three-course dinner and a morning and afternoon game drive daily.

For reservations please email reservations@gondwanagr.co.za or call Tel. +27 (0)21 555 0807.

Further information: www.gondwanagr.co.za.

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Really lucked out with ellie sightings at #GondwanaGameReserve this weekend! Review on #Bizcommunity soon!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        

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ABOUT RUTH COOPER

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