Makakatana Bay Lodge

Fact Sheet

On the Western Shores of Lake St Lucia, inside the iSimangaliso Wetland Park in KwaZulu-Natal: 8 suites and 20 beds, owned and run by the Morrison family.

At a glance

Setting

The Western Shores of Lake St Lucia: the only privately owned lodge inside the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

The park

South Africa's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, listed 1 December 1999: 1,328,901 hectares of land and sea.

Heritage

Four generations of the Morrison family have lived on this ground since 1918. The lodge was built in 1998 and opened in April 1999.

Awards

World Luxury Hotel Awards 2023, 2024, 2025.

Wildlife

Four of the Big Five — elephant, buffalo, rhino and leopard — are found in this part of the park. There is no lion.

Health

Low-risk malaria area. Guests should seek medical advice before travelling.

Power

Solar since April 2023. By day the lodge and the staff village run entirely on solar; at night we draw from the grid or on solar-charged batteries. A diesel generator, kept 1 km away, is emergency backup only.

Vehicles and boats

- 3 open safari vehicles
- 12-seater barge boat on the Narrows
- 8-seater boat for the lake crossing
- 2 solar eco-boats (4 guests each)

Contacts

Reservations

book@makakatana.com · +27 (0)87 059 9015
Monday–Sunday 08h00–17h00

Lodge

lodge@makakatana.com · +27 (0)79 053 3821

The lodge

Suite	Number	Configuration	Maximum
Luxury Suite	5	• 3 twin suites (2 single beds) • 2 double suites (1 king bed)	Up to 3 adults (the 3rd on a daybed)
Family Suite	2	Sleeps 4: a full king bed and 2 twin beds in a separate interleading bedroom.	2 adults and 2 children (12 yrs and under), max 3 adults
Honeymoon Suite	1	King Bed	2 adults

- Single supplement: +50% of the per person sharing rate
- 3rd guest (13+ yrs): 80% of the sharing rate
- Child (12 yrs and under): 50% of the sharing rate
- Family Suite: An extra bed for a 3rd child (12 yrs and under) by special arrangement, plus the applicable child rate. Priced per unit.
- For 2 adults and 3 children over 12 yrs: we recommend a Family Suite as a triple and a Luxury Suite for the parents.

Renovated in mid-2026

- A complete refreshed look through the lodge
- New and wider decks and boardwalks
- A new deck directly in front of the lodge at the water’s edge, for relaxing, canapés and private dinners under the moonlight
- Landscaping and lighting
- A brand-new main boma
- A refreshed main lodge interior with extended decks
- A new smaller private boma on the deck, used after nature drives and before guests move to the main boma

Dining

- Stunning spaces for private dining on request
- Early dining is arranged for children; children are not permitted to dine in the boma

Activities

Our scheduled activities are included in our Fully Inclusive Rate.

Activity	What it is
Full-day boat safari — the Narrows	A wetland nature drive through the Western Shores to the boat pick-up point, then a leisurely 2-hour cruise on the Narrows of Lake St Lucia among crocodile, hippo and birdlife, with a picnic lunch in the park.
Full-day beach safari — Eastern Shores	Across Lake St Lucia by boat to meet your guide on the Eastern Shores, then to the beach in the open safari vehicle: swimming, snorkelling and a picnic lunch on the Indian Ocean coastline, and a nature drive back for high tea.
Afternoon wetland nature drive	An afternoon wetland nature drive on the Western Shores, with a sundowner stop.
Morning wetland nature drive	A morning nature drive on the Western Shores.
Night drive — Western Shores	After dark, in place of the afternoon drive, looking for hippo out of the water, genet, civet, serval, owls and more.
Sunrise or sunset eco-boat — Makakatana Bay	2 near-silent solar eco-boats, 4 guests each, from the bay in front of the lodge.
Birding morning and bush breakfast (optional)	An early start in the wetlands with a guide and a bush breakfast (or return to the lodge for brunch), back by 11h00. Pre-booked in advance.
Hluhluwe–iMfolozi day trip	An early start for the Big Five in Africa's oldest proclaimed nature reserve, 1h30 each way on public roads, with a picnic brunch; back for a light lunch. Pre-booked in advance. Offered on a 4-night stay on request.

Important notes

- Full-day safaris need a stay of 2 nights or more and are not run on arrival or departure days.
- On a 1-night stay we offer an afternoon wetland nature drive on arrival and a morning wetland nature drive (or eco-boat, weather permitting and subject to the availability of a guide) before departure.
- *Night drives and **eco-boat trips are offered as an alternative to the morning or afternoon drives, subject to the availability of a guide, the weather and lodge logistics.
- Birding trips are offered in lieu of a morning drive or on longer stays, and must be booked in advance; subject to the availability of a birding guide.
- Activities are weather permitting.
- A 2-night stay includes 1 full-day safari — the boat safari, or the beach safari if requested in advance. Recommend a 3-night stay to do both full-day safaris.
- Hluhluwe on request only (booked in advance).

When to come

Our rates are the same in every month. What changes is the wildlife.

What	When	Notes
Dry-season game viewing	May – September	Thinner bush and animals drawn to water: the best months for game on the Western Shores.
Whales	June – November	Booked with outside operators as an extra.
Migrant birding	November – April	Summer migrants arrive: among the finest birding in South Africa.
Baby chameleons	January and February	Our guides look for flap-necked chameleons on night drives.
Fireflies	Winter	On night drives.

May and June: Little rain and wind
July to October: Peak (windy and can have downpours)
November to April: Summer, Hot

Getting here

Nhlozi Gate (Gate 11), off the P380: about 14 km from the N2 turn-off to the gate and about 17.5 km in all, the last 1 km on sand. GPS **28.238455°S, 32.419261°E**; Google Maps directions are not always correct here. About 2h40 from King Shaka International and about 1h30 from Richards Bay; transfers are priced per vehicle, one way, on our Transfers sheet.

iSimangaliso gate hours

- Summer, 1 Nov – 31 Mar: 05h00–19h00
- Winter, 1 Apr – 31 Oct: 06h00–18h00

Arrival and departure

- Check-in 13h00
- Check-out 10h00
- Early check-in or late departure by prior arrangement
- Lunch on the day of arrival must be pre-booked

Late arrival is pre-booked, and only through Nhlozi Gate. We arrange the authorisation in advance and a member of our team meets guests at the gate and escorts them in. There is no entry after 21h00, except by the park's exception, with a late-entry park fee of R1,000. The park charges R600 if an entry permit is not handed back on departure.

Full directions are in Access & Directions 2026–2027.

Booked with outside operators

Birding, whale watching, horse riding and deep-sea fishing can be booked directly with outside operators, at their prices; transfers for these are not included. We run no fishing and no guided walks ourselves. In-room massage by appointment, subject to therapist availability, at extra cost. The treatment menu is shown at check-in.

Conservation levy

	2026	2027
Conservation levy, adult (per night)	R130	R230
Conservation levy, child (per night)	R65	R115

iSimangaliso park entry fees

	2026	2027
Park entry fee, adult	R134	TBC
Park entry fee, child (under 12 yrs)	R98	TBC
Park entry fee, vehicle	R152	TBC
Park levy, per person (per night)	R15	TBC
Community levy, per person (per night)	R15	TBC

Please note: Park entry fees and levies are set and charged for by the iSimangaliso park authority and are subject to change without prior notice.

- Park entry fees must be paid in cash
- The speed limit in the park is 40 km/h

Rates and booking

Our rates and booking terms are on the rates page of makakatana.com.

Children are welcome in our Luxury and Family suites under a parent's supervision at all times; children 12 yrs and under pay 50% of the adult sharing rate, and a parent signs our child policy before arrival.

Rates, the full terms and conditions and the child policy are on our rate sheets.