

JETTING AWAY TO AFRICA

Travelling by private jet has become even more desirable as travellers eschew the crowds.

Robyn Tucker-Peck investigates
Roar Privé's end-to-end travel experiences



Situated on a secluded island in Madagascar, Time + Tide Miavana is one of the properties guests can stay at when travelling with Roar Privé

Airline travel has changed considerably since the COVID-19 pandemic. Flying on a commercial flight is now even more restrictive with limited or no food or beverage services, mask wearing, temperature checks, health forms to fill in, restrictive bathroom access plus the usual one piece of carry-on luggage. When travellers arrive at their destination, there are limited options available to them, with iconic landmarks, museums & galleries and theme parks operating at reduced capacity or subject to closure.

The pandemic has created greater demand for private jet personal travel with experiences away from crowds, featuring private accommodations such as villas and private islands incorporating a customised approach. Opportunities for smaller groups and family are on the rise and private jet companies are seeing a spike in new customers. This may foretell permanent changes in the industry.

AFRICAN PASSIONS

Growing up in Africa, I was left with three passions which have stayed with me to this day. The first is seeing animals able to run free, like the wildebeest, zebras, giraffes and springbok, foraging across the expansive grasslands of the Kenyan savannah. The second is my love of elephants the smartest and largest land animals in the world and lastly, a love of sandy white beaches with clear blue water. Luxury travel agency Roar Africa delivers on all three scores. If you book a trip with them, you'll be in good company, as it counts actor Robert Redford among its happy customers, who said his experience in South Africa and Botswana with the company was, "the most amazing and outstanding trip" he and his family had ever experienced.

Reimagining private jet travel as a travel experience for families and small groups, Roar Privé, a programme

The pandemic has created greater demand for personal private jet travel experiences away from crowds

from bespoke travel company Roar Africa, was borne out of insight into what the future of luxury travel will look like, and an understanding of what guests want when they travel to Africa, says Deborah Calmeyer, CEO and founder of Roar Africa. "The current devastating humanitarian and economic impact of COVID-19 has forced us to reimagine travel anew, with smarter itineraries, smaller footprints and the kinds of transformative experiences that foster empathy, open-mindedness and a connection between those who travel and the communities who benefit from it," she says.

The greatest threat to Africa's wildlife is the mistaken belief that someone else will save it, says Calmeyer, who has set her sights on making positive change in Africa for Africans, with native-born guides and a curated network of local experts. "As we dream and strive to be a better version of ourselves, know that your next Africa trip is as essential for personal, mental, and emotional wellbeing as it is for the survival of the continent's wildlife and wildlife spaces. It's never been more evident than now, while travel is a privilege not a right, that thousands of human and animal lives depend upon it," she adds.



Clockwise from top left: bespoke bedding and nightwear; spacious cabins inside the jet; the plane awaits passengers on the runway



BUSH AND BEACH

The schedule offers a true bush and beach experience: game-drive safari viewing in Luangwa, Zambia, and your own private island in Madagascar. What makes this trip so special is the low impact, low touch version of ones' own private Africa, offering absolute isolation but in safe, luxurious and frequently breathtaking surroundings. Travelling by private jet and departing and arriving at private terminals with minimum human contact naturally takes some of the anxieties out of travel as guests don't have to negotiate check-in lines, security checks and busy airport terminals. Roar Privé guests additionally have access to a dedicated team of guides, rangers, chefs and a butler to service every aspect of their journey along with medi-centres and healthcare if needed.

The itinerary for this trip starts from any private airport in Hong Kong or Singapore or anywhere in the Far East on a private jet operated by Vistajet, Asia's fastest-growing

private jet brand, which has been flying executives around the world for 20 years. From Asia, customers fly on a Bombardier Global 6000 jet to Mfuwe Airport, a rambling settlement in the Eastern Province of Zambia. It serves the tourism industry focused on nearby Luangwa National Park and other wildlife areas in the Luangwa Valley.

Guests landing at Mfuwe are met by a private guide who then drives them to Time + Tide Chinzombo, Zambia's premier safari camp, which is home to just six villas. Situated on a curve in the Luangwa river, each villa boasts panoramic views of the abundant wildlife that prowl along the riverbank, including the elusive leopard, while private plunge pools are shaded by ancient sprawling trees. With a transfer of around an hour and a half and game drive enroute, guests spend three nights at Chinzombo or however long they want for their customised trip.

Private safari vehicles with no exposure to



Clockwise from above:
the expansive
villas at Time +
Tide Chinzombo;
Madagascan lemur



other travellers enable you to explore the region's diverse habitats with game drives, safari walks and boat cruises in season. Luangwa is one of the great wildlife sanctuaries of the world with one-off game rich areas, including epic leopard and lion sightings and iconic river crossings of large breeding herds of elephant.

After spending three safari-packed nights at Chinzombo, you will be transferred by road back to Mfuwe Airport, where the Vistajet Bombardier Global 6000 will fly you directly to Diego Suarez International Airport in Madagascar, a short hop of approximately two hours and 40 minutes. When you land at Diego Suarez, your private helicopter team will meet you on the tarmac, assist with immigration and passport control and then it's a 30-minute helicopter ride to Nosy Angkao private island, home to Time + Tide Miavana in Madagascar. With ocean views and direct beach access from each of its 14 villas, this resort delivers an altogether different experience to its sister property, with its white palm-lined beaches and extensive coral reefs, and you can explore the island by complimentary bike or buggy.

A MODERN DAY JURASSIC WORLD

Madagascar is truly a celebration of the extraordinary – a Jurassic World for modern day explorers or those with a penchant for places off the beaten track. This adventure playground offers iconic water and land-based excursions, from hiking to paddle boarding. Approximately 90 per cent of all plant and animal species found in Madagascar are endemic to this African island country. You can go lemur trekking – there are more than 100 species of lemurs –all of which viewing more than 100 species of lemurs, all of which are classified as rare, vulnerable or endangered.

On the day of departure guests will again be transferred by private helicopter back to Diego Suarez where a Vistajet Bombardier Global 6000 will fly them directly back to Hong Kong or Singapore.

Roar Africa do not own any properties but select five-star lodges that they have personally vetted. Itineraries are not listed on the website as each needs to be customised, depending on where the clients are flying from and where they desire to spend extra days. If it's good enough for Robert Redford, then we're sure it's good enough for us. roarafrica.com

This page from left: helicopter transfer and alfresco dining by the beach at Time + Tide Miavana

Opposite page from top: fishing in the Indian Ocean; Madagascar is home to more than 100 types of lemur



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Madagascar: A walk on the wild side

Five animal species endemic to an isle renowned for its biodiversity

- 1 **Madagascar Pochard:** the rarest duck in the world is endemic to the marshes and freshwater lakes of Madagascar
- 2 **Giraffe weevil:** so called for its long neck, it has a red shell that covers its hind legs and is found in Madagascar's forests
- 3 **Panther chameleon:** the size of a house cat, it's one of the largest in the world and can measure up to 20 inches long
- 4 **Sifaka:** this cute-looking lemur has long silky fur and is one of the most endangered animals on the island due to habitat loss
- 5 **Tomato frogs:** They are named for their vibrant orange-red coloured skin, which produces a thick, sticky fluid to deter potential predators like snakes