

Why Singita's luxury lodge design signals a competitive advantage

According to Forbes Magazine, monied travellers are increasingly looking for "experiences, privacy, and unique memories all bundled into one bespoke package." Despite wobbles in the global economy, the luxury safari market remains a competitive and thriving marketing, where experiences are driving tourist numbers. But, how can properties gain a competitive advantage in this market, with new high-end lodges unveiled every year and visitors continually looking for the next thrilling adventure?



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Broadening the scope of guest activities is certainly an option (walking with wildlife and stargazing have been popular, along with particular conservation projects) – but that doesn't guarantee an increase in the number of visitors, or indeed lead to customer retention. There is, however, evidence to suggest that quality accommodation and inspiring design, together with sustainable ecotourism, are driving tourists to return to a given destination.

Modernising the safari experience

This was something South African design team Cécile & Boyd intuited in 1993 when they created the effortless luxury that defined the 12-suite Singita Ebony Lodge in the Sabi Sand Game Reserve in Kruger National Park. At the time, accommodation was typically an adjunct to the bush experience – often rudimentary, with little sense of ease or elegance. Working with Singita founder Luke Bailes, Cécile & Boyd pioneered the modern safari experience for visitors.

<https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/580/165878.html>

Today, the spirit of a lodge is often reflected as much in its interiors and décor as in its landscapes; this is partly because the lines between living space and the great outdoors have been deliberately blurred.

Cécile & Boyd were among the first to explore this paradigm, where the seamless blend of nature and the built environment offer a unique proposition for the adventurous yet luxury-loving traveller. When Singita Ebony Lodge was redesigned in 2015, Cécile & Boyd replaced external walls with canvas and glass to replicate the safari tent experience, without any of the inconvenience.



Evolving the perception of an African aesthetic has always been part of Cécile & Boyd's mandate. As a result, Singita Lebombo, Castleton and Ebony Lodges are among the 20 top resorts in South Africa in the prestigious Condé Nast Traveller (UK & USA) Readers' Choice Awards in the African resorts category. Singita Pamushana Lodge (Zimbabwe) and Singita Sabora Tented Camp (Tanzania) have also named among the 30 best on the continent.

Singita Lebombo's deference to natural elements means light, open, airy spaces and minimal distraction from the panoramic views at this eco-lodge in Kruger National Park, where the 15 suites appear to fall away from a sheer rock-face. Cécile & Boyd call the villas 'translucent glass tents' canopied with branches that can be penetrated by both sunlight and moonlight.

Their use of glass, bleached wood, metal, canvas, rattan and luxury linen create a haven in the bush – yet what sets the lodge apart is the sense that there is no item out of place.