



ST LUCIA

- iSimangaliso Wetland Park South Africa -



St Lucia

World Heritage Site

SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST WORLD HERITAGE SITE

iSIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK

ST LUCIA - PLACE OF WONDER

iSimangaliso means miracle and wonder which aptly describe the exceptional Kwa-Zulu Natal Wetland Park on the Zululand coast

iSimangaliso Wetland Park was recognised by UNESCO due to its rich biological diversity. It is a natural beauty and features unique eco-systems concentrated in a small area. The high level of diversity of fauna and flora species is due to the different types of eco-systems that are present in the Park.

Africa's largest estuarine system sustains an awe-inspiring and diverse eco-system. Lake St Lucia owns a sense of place like no other - one of the most abundant, naturally-endowed and beautiful pieces of real estate on earth. It is the focal point of the UNESCO World Heritage Listing and has been a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance since 1986. It is 80km long and 23km at its widest point.



Aside from the lake and dune eco-systems, the Park protects a marine zone of warm tropical seas, coral reefs and endless sandy beaches, the papyrus and reed wetland of the uMkhuze swamps on the north of the lake; and on the western shores, dry savannah and thornveld.



The estuarine lake offers one of the most popular birding destinations in South Africa. Of these 155 fish species that have been recorded in Lake St Lucia estuarine system, 71 of these species use the Lake as a nursery area. More than 2 180 species of flowering plants have been documented within iSimangaliso.



To quote Nelson Mandela, *"iSimangaliso must be the only place on the globe where the oldest mammal (the rhinoceros) and the world's biggest terrestrial mammal (the elephant) share an eco-system with the world's oldest fish (the coelacanth) and the world's biggest marine mammal (the whale)".*



Several species of whales regularly pass by the KZN coastline on their annual migration.

ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES

WHALE WATCHING

Sightings of whales are common off the coast of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. Southern Hemisphere Humpback Whales make up the majority of whale sightings in KwaZulu Natal. This species tends to be more acrobatic and graceful with its breaching than Southern Right whales.



BOAT CRUISE ON LAKE ST LUCIA

A 2-hour boat cruise on the St Lucia Estuary, exploring the various eco-systems and looking out for Hippos, Crocs, Kingfishers, Fish Eagles, Herons, Mangrove swamps and much more. Your skipper and guide will share his vast knowledge of the wildlife that you may encounter.



iSIMANGALISO SUNSET DRIVE

A late afternoon drive traveling between forest, pans and grasslands, in search of wildlife. An in-depth exploration of the Wetlands and its inhabitants, history and scenic beauty. The Safari stops for sundowners and snacks at Catalina Bay or Lake Bhangazi overlooking Lake St Lucia.



iSIMANGALISO / CAPE VIDAL TOUR

Safari into the Eastern Shores of iSimangaliso Wetland Park through to the sandy beach of Cape Vidal, in an open game drive vehicle with the possibility of seeing many animals such as Leopard, Elephant, Rhino, Wildebeest, Buffalo, Antelopes, Warthog. Arrive at the beautiful beach of Cape Vidal where you will be able to snorkel and swim in the beautiful ocean (tide and weather dependant).



HLUHLUWE/iMFOLOZI FULL DAY SAFARI/GAME DRIVE

A full day excursion through this Big Five reserve. Once the hunting grounds of the famous Zulu King Shaka. The park is renowned for its efforts in saving the white rhino from extinction. Travel on a open Safari Vehicle from St Lucia to view the oldest wild life park in Africa. Enjoy Breakfast and Lunch while viewing the pristine landscape. Full day safaris or Half Day Safaris can be arranged with various operators.



NIGHT DRIVE - iSIMANGALISO PARK

This 2.5-3 hour nocturnal affair takes you along the 4x4 tracks in the Eastern Shores Reserve, where you may encounter various local nocturnal residents. Sightings often include Hippo, Buffalo, Nightjars, Kudu, Waterbuck, Leopard and the endemic Sitara's Dwarf Chameleon. Conducted in an open safari vehicle with two spotlights.



HORSE SAFARIS

Experience an exhilarating horse safari either on the beach or in the iSimangaliso game reserve where you ride close to the wildlife. Beach horse safaris are available 2 hours either side of low tide, but bush horse safaris depart throughout the day.



TURTLE TOURS

Seasonal Nov -Feb (departure times are tide dependent. Tour are 6-7 hours)
Enjoy a night safari to Cape Vidal then travel 25 kilometres north along the beach in search of nesting turtles and hatchlings. Experience the miracle of the Leatherback Turtle (weighing up to 900kg) as well as the Loggerhead Turtle returning to their nesting grounds. This tour includes a light dinner and refreshments.



DEEP SEA FISHING

Weather permitting this tour departs around 05h30 and lasts for approximately 6-7 hours. All bait and tackle is supplied, just bring your own lunch pack. What you catch is what you keep. A fishing permit will need to be purchased at our local post office. Full day charters are also available (enquire)



No - it is not a myth - Hippos do walk in our streets!

Although they are wild animals, they tolerate humans. As long as humans do not get too close and do not threaten them, they graze away happily.



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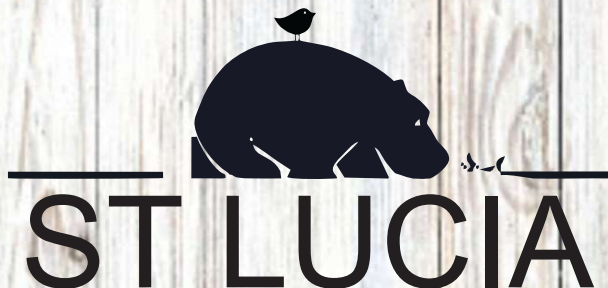
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