



THE SAFARI EXPERIENCE WAITING GAME



SHENTON SAFARIS

Close encounters:

The Last Waterhole hide at Mwamba is one of several set up at Shenton Safaris' camps in South Luangwa NP

HIDES TO SEEK

Hides come in all shapes and sizes. They might be submerged or in trees, rustic or high-tech, sparsely equipped or full of creature comforts. What they have in common is their positioning in locations where wildlife often wanders, usually beside a waterhole, allowing for extraordinary sightings of animals and birds that don't even know you're there. Hides are becoming more common in today's camps. **Here's a small sample:**

1 SOUTH AFRICA

Zimanga Private Game Reserve is a photographer's dream. Its nine hides were designed by Bence Mate, an award-winning photographer and world authority on hide design. Focusing on different subjects ranging from large mammals to bird baths, from reflections to backdrops of fever-tree forests, they come with high-spec equipment and one-way glass, allowing those inside to remain invisible to their wild subjects.

2 NAMIBIA

Andersson's at Ongava, bordering Etosha, is all about gaining a deeper understanding of wildlife, with its own conservationists, a research centre and smart TVs showing its prolific wildlife in real-time at the waterhole. But you can see all these visitors, including rhinos and lions, for yourself from their water-level hide nearby, open day and night.

3 BOTSWANA

Mashatu Game Reserve has expertly designed hides available for hire, complete with professional photographers as guides and tutors. Birders will love their infinity bird hide while the Matebole Hide lies on an elephant corridor. Other hides are relocated according to conditions, wherever the wildlife is at its photographic best.

4 ZAMBIA

Shenton Safaris offer a terrific variety of photographic hides at their Kaingo and Mwamba camps. Snap hippos at eye level from a grass-screened hide carved into the riverbank. Shoot elephants from above in a 'treehouse' hide and capture colourful carmine bee-eaters from a camouflaged boat facing their nesting sites in the sandy banks of the Luangwa.

5 KENYA

The sunken hide at **Lentor** in the Olkirimatian Conservancy comes complete with air-conditioning, soundproofing, professional lighting – and comfy beds. You may not want to fall asleep, however, with nocturnal sightings that might include striped hyenas and caracal coming to the waterhole.

6 TANZANIA

Hides are a rare feature in Tanzania's camps and lodges, but **Sand Rivers Selous** in Nyerere National Park is an exception. Their simple hide, complete with cooler box, lies in their 'garden,' built into a tree that overlooks a marsh frequented by myriad birds and wildlife including elephants and giraffes.