

Surge in arrivals, feedback prompts Victoria Falls Safari Club redevelopment

Winner of the Association of Zimbabwe Travel Agents' Best Boutique Hotel award, Victoria Falls Safari Club, one of Africa Albida Tourism's (AAT) properties, is expected to begin redevelopment on 1 November 2017.

AAT Chief Executive Ross Kennedy said the development had been prompted both by a surge in international arrivals, which looked set to continue, as well as feedback from guests and the travel trade.



Victoria Falls Safari Club

“The swimming pool area, which will be located between the Safari Club and Victoria Falls Safari Suites, will feature a plunge pool, with a horizon waterfall spilling over into a lower 15m lap pool,” said Kennedy. The pools will be surrounded by a split-level deck with sun loungers on two sides, and an adjacent thatched gazebo, which will house a bar, servery, change rooms, showers and toilets. The pool area will also feature rock gardens and will overlook a small waterhole frequented by kudu, warthog and bushbuck as well as various bird species.

The upgrade and expansion of the Safari Club’s central building will double the size of its existing deck, increase the lounge space, and create a new restaurant, with a dedicated kitchen and storerooms below.



Victoria Falls Safari Club deck

There has been a clear growth in demand for Victoria Falls as a destination, already witnessed in 2017 by an increase of over 25% in international arrivals, coupled with an advanced demand for 2018 and 2019.

"It is clear that all of us in the industry need to be reviewing quality, service, hospitality and the facilities and activities we offer in order to meet that demand. In the tourism sector, in a destination like Victoria Falls, operators need to respond to the market demand, keep abreast of trends and, equally important, keep in tune with competitor offerings.

As a group, we also need to ensure we maintain our position in the market as one of Victoria Falls' leading properties, and this development gives us additional leverage to encourage the high-end market to choose us."



Victoria Falls Safari Club suite

The new generation of travellers are always looking for differentiators and experiences, and hence, the need to be constantly reviewing our offerings to cater to the ever-changing trends. I believe at current growth rates, the new Victoria Falls airport might be too small in three to five years, and as tourism and hospitality operators, we all need to be playing our part in investing in the future, whilst protecting the character and integrity of Victoria Falls,” added Kennedy.

The Safari Club will be closed from 15 January to 28 February 2018 as the contractors move into the building, following the completion of the external ground preparation work on 15 December. The project is scheduled to be completed in March 2018.

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