

ON THE WILD SIDE

Here's the inside scoop on the outside world! We look at some of the astounding feats accomplished by intrepid explorers young and old; the latest developments and products; the best new books on the shelves; and upcoming events in which you, *The Intrepid Explorer* reader, can become involved. So what are you waiting for? Get out there and make the most of the outdoors!

Compiled by Robbie Stammers



AND THE
WINNER IS...

Rated the biggest underwater photography competition, World ShootOut

Underwater Photo Grand Prix Competition 2015 closed its entries at the end of last year and winners from all over the globe were announced live on stage at Germany's annual Boot Show in January after a gruelling six-week judging process.

There is reportedly no other underwater photography competition that attracts such a significant number of entries, nor offers such spectacular prizes. Hundreds of photographers from countries around the world take part each year in the World ShootOut competition, and thousands of images were submitted last year. Entrants from Germany, France, Slovakia, the United States and Belgium were just some of the countries that participated in the Sharks Category.

Ugu South Coast Tourism (UGSCT) came on board as one of the main prize partners of the prestigious Sharks Category, offering a 14-day trip for two to the Paradise of the Zulu Kingdom, KwaZulu-Natal—valued at \$6 000. The action-packed prize included international flights, two dives per day on the famous Protea Banks with African Dive Adventures, and daily dives on Aliwal Shoal with Crystal Divers SA. Many UGSCT members also generously contributed with accommodation, activity and meal sponsorships.

Said UGSCT CEO Justin Mackrory, "We see this campaign as an excellent opportunity—not only to showcase our diverse destination and our two world-class dive sites but as a way to interact directly with the diving and adventure fraternity and with all those who treasure nature as much as we do.

"We would like to extend our congratulations to the winner Tanya Houppermans and

look forward to welcoming her and her husband on their forthcoming dream trip."

Based in the US, Tanya lives outside Washington, DC. She said, "My husband and I are very adventurous. In fact, we both used to teach skydiving, so looking at the South Coast itinerary, we cannot believe our luck. Action, adventure, diving—and with such diverse experiences on offer. Neither of us has ever been to South Africa (or anywhere in Africa), so this truly is a bucket-list dream come true. We are thrilled to be able to participate in this adventure!"

John Miller from Umkomaas, who owns a shark-cage diving business on the KZN South Coast, was also a finalist in the Sharks Category.

For more information and to see the winning images, go to www.worldshootout.org.



FOLLOW THE BIKER QUEEN

Double-Up Mzansi Style is a travel and lifestyle show that takes viewers across South Africa to discover the hidden treasures of our landscape. The new show is hosted by Mzansi's biking queen Seipei Mashugane and her travel companion and internationally acclaimed comedian, Tats Nkonzo.

The show focuses on unearthed and amazing features in all nine of South Africa's provinces. The aim is to entice viewers to take their own trips and discover more about their beautiful home country. Each week, Seipei and Tats open up the throttle on a sidecar motor-bike to explore the land's diverse landscapes, exploring some of the extraordinary attractions that each province boasts.

Mashugane is a 34-year-old mother of two who has an undeniable passion for motorbikes and the open road. Known as the Biker Queen (also the name of her business), she has managed to make a livelihood out of her passion for motorbikes, combined with events and public relations. Born in Soweto, her goal is to strengthen the biking community in her hometown and to inspire and enrich other females.

Nkonzo is a stand-up comedian, singer, musician and TV personality best known for hosting *SA's Got Talent*.

Double-Up Mzansi Style airs on e.tv every Monday at 20h30.



WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH

Scouting around an area you're only somewhat familiar with, it's magical to grasp the possibilities such a place has to offer. The perfect playground for any adventure racer is the Transkei. Its true beauty lies beyond the famous Kei River ferry, where the pure rawness of culture and soil meets the beauty of the Wild Coast.

Unlike most events that occur along the Wild Coast, the Merrell Transkei Tuff adventure race takes teams of two or four through magical canopied terrain, onto exquisite waterfalls, swims in rivers surrounded by steep canyon walls and along magnificent beaches.

"The Wild Coast has an abundance of raw beauty—and as organisers of the Merrell Transkei Tuff, it has been a case of piecing together these magnificent landmarks where we are showcasing these unforgettable places to athletes from all around South Africa," shares adventure photographer and race organiser, Bruce Viaene.

The host of this awesome event, Wavecrest Beach Hotel & Spa, will house the teams from 26 to 28 February 2016. The 150-kilometre, 24-hour race will feature a snorkelling leg, flat-water paddling leg, a trekking leg, swimming leg and mountain biking leg that will send the Merrell Transkei Tuff teams into the rural lands surrounding the Wavecrest area.

Go to wonadventure.co.za/transkei-tuff for further details.

A SWELL PRIZE!

In our last edition, we offered one reader the chance to win a uniquely crafted surfboard by WaveWorx. We had loads of entries, but the lucky winner was Tamara Krige from Cape Town.

Pictured here are (from left to right): Adrian Schroeder and Adriano Folsch from Auric Auto, Tamara Krige with her new surfboard, *The Intrepid Explorer* publishing editor Robbie Stammers, and WaveWorx's Justin Healey. Thanks to Auric Auto, ArtLab and WaveWorx.





LINE-UP FOR MARCH & APRIL

- 6 March** Shortstraw, The Plastics
- 13 March** Al Baire, Bye Beneco
- 20 March** Zebra & Giraffe, Monark
- 21 March** Fund-raiser: Jack Parow, PHFAT
- 27 March** Beatenberg, John Wizards
- 30 March** Of Monsters and Men
- 1 April** Jungle
- 3 April** December Streets, The Vanilla

For tickets, go to www.webtickets.co.za.

MUSIC UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

Kirstenbosch Summer Sunset Concerts are a fantastic way to spend a Sunday afternoon in Cape Town. The concert venue is within the botanical gardens, with performances every Sunday running up to the beginning of April.

The concerts have a special feel, mainly due to the breathtaking setting. Part of the charm also lies in the warm, friendly and relaxed atmosphere, with concert goers picnicking on the soft grass banks that slope downward toward the stage. An

excellent way to enjoy the concert is to pack a delicious picnic basket, bring along friends and family, and find a spot on the Kirstenbosch slopes. The concerts are very popular, so get there early to ensure you get a good spot.



NOU GAAN ONS BRAAI!

If you haven't watched Barry Hilton's hysterically funny and poignant comedy skit about how long South Africans take to braai, then you're missing out! The clip has been watched over 600 000 times on YouTube, and the tally keeps climbing. Off the back of this skit's success, Barry and his wife Sandy have opened up an online shop at www.mycousin.co.za where people can purchase all sorts of "Nou Gaan Ons Braai!" goodies: from T-shirts and Zippo lighters to portable braai shades. An absolutely perfect gift for any serious braaier. (Check out Barry's Last Word on page 104 of this edition.)

Experience the world

"Travel makes one modest. You see what a tiny place you occupy in the world." - Gustav Flaubert

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MELLOW BUT NOT MILD

The first Tiger's Milk restaurant opened in December 2014, bringing much-needed buzz and delicious food to Muizenberg's Surfer's Corner. The glass-fronted 220-seater offers panoramic views of the bay, and the Harbour House design team's eclectic retro biker-chic interior is a visual blast.

Over weekends, Tiger's Milk Muizenberg draws fun seekers of all ages, with a great selection of local craft beer complementing the mood and the food. A menu consisting of mostly ribs, burgers, pizzas and steaks—generous portions, perfectly prepared—has quickly become known as "Dude Food".

Spurred by the success of Tiger's Milk in Muizenberg, a second branch opened in July 2015 on Long Street, in the heart of Cape Town's hippest hood. Smaller in size, Tiger's on Long gives sexy expression to the design team's flair for creating hip, sumptuous interiors without regurgitating clichés. The same Dude Food menu works its magic, with bluegrass, funk and old-school tunes adding to the mellow but not mild vibe. Steam-punkish brass beer taps in the main dining area are cool, but nothing beats the Tiger's Milk and Part Wolf craft beer taps—fashioned from the refurbished petrol tanks of vintage motorbikes.

Additional branches will be opening soon in Claremont, Century City and Stellenbosch.

Check out tigersmilk.co.za/muizenberg or email: muizenberg@tigersmilk.co.za.



WILL YOU BE THE NEXT KING OF THE BERG?

The X-Berg Challenge is a unique concept: The challenge is to fly, run or cycle through preset 'dots/turn-points' that sketch out a flexible route in the mighty Drakensberg. The length of the race is measured according to the straight line connecting the dots or turn points, and is generally in the region of 150km. The first athlete to reach the goal at the end of the route is crowned King of the Berg.

The route and race are structured in such a way that cyclists, runners and paragliders are all on an even footing and stand a chance to win outright. Apart from competing against the other disciplines, there are prizes for each class (i.e. first three runners, first three cyclists and first three paragliders or team to finish).

The X-Berg Challenge takes place from 28 April to 1 May 2016. For more information, visit www.xcafrica.com or e-mail: xcafrica@gmail.com.

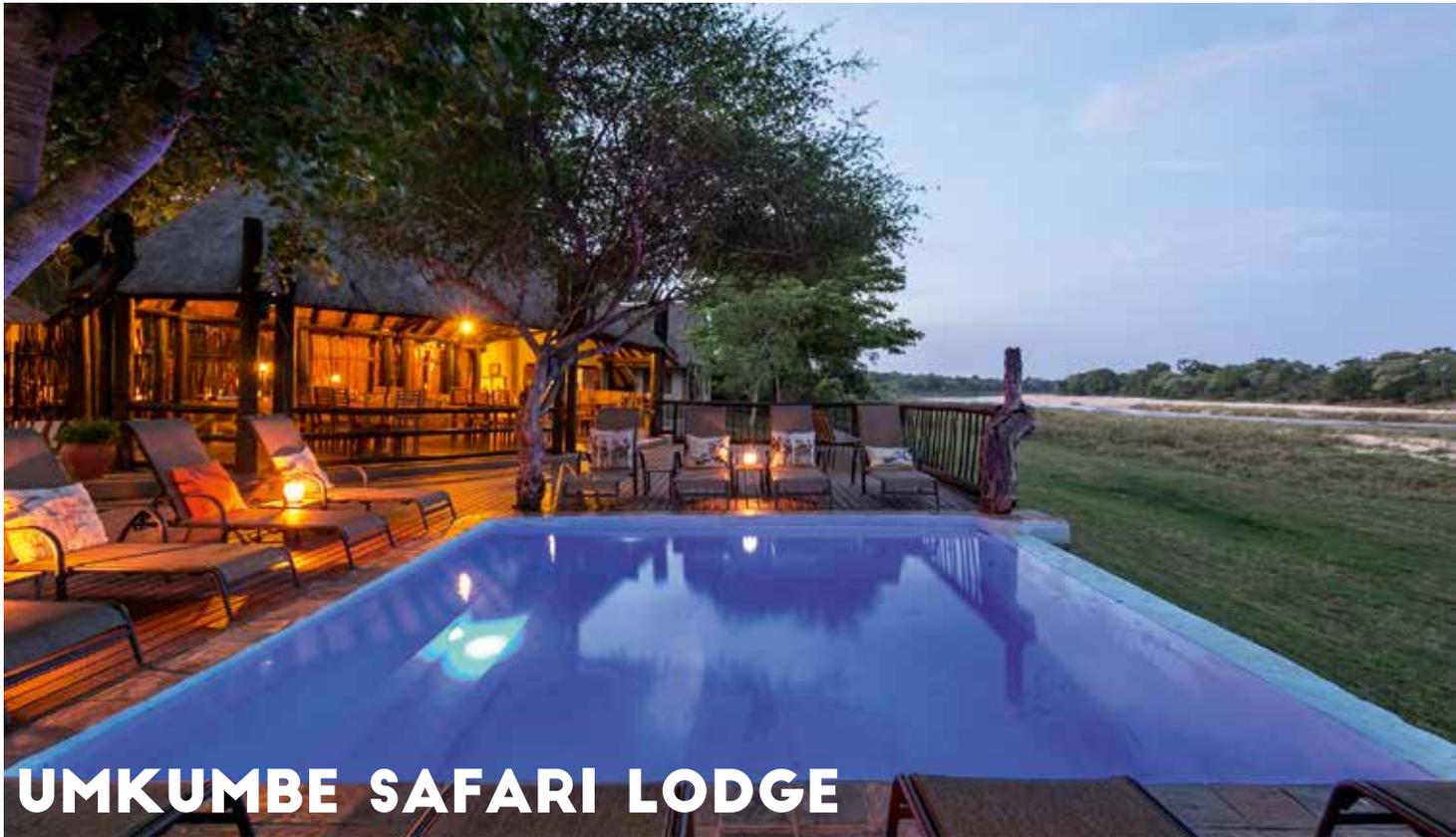
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UMKUMBE SAFARI LODGE

A non-perennial river—framed by thickets of lush vegetation and hugged by sandy reed-lined banks—eagerly flows past a humble, authentic and unpretentious lodge located in the heart of the Sabi Sand Game Reserve. Umkumbe Safari Lodge is an affordable, family-friendly establishment located in one of South Africa's leading private game reserves within the Greater Kruger.

The pristine open savannah grasslands, marula bushveld and mopane scrub provide a diverse ecosystem that is home to the Big Five and a variety of plains game.

Located in a prime position overlooking the Sand River, Umkumbe takes advantage of its location. The river in front of the lodge attracts a tableau of predators and breeding herds of elephant. A wooden walkway joins the six river-facing rooms to the main area comprising a lounge, bar, outdoor boma and swimming pool.

In total, there are 10 tastefully decorated rooms.

The rim-flow splash pool in the main area on the deck is a highlight. Guests are often seen hanging over the edge of the pool, gin and tonic in hand, watching big herds of buffalo trundling down to the river. Vervet monkeys, genet cats and the occasional warthog visit the main area—making you feel completely cocooned by nature.

When you're not relaxing under cobalt-blue skies in the heat of the shimmering sun on the comfortable wooden deck area, you'll no doubt be enjoying a game drive led by a professional ranger. There are two game drives per day. You need to head out at first light to catch predators on the prowl, and evening game drives allow you to observe what happens under the cover of darkness.

Dining is always a protracted affair, with

dinners being a magnificent time to sit around the campfire and discuss the day's sightings with fellow guests. In between game drives is your personal time: read a book or watch a congress of hyperactive monkeys darting back and forth at the poolside.

Umkumbe is owner-run and managed, so expect your hosts to pop in and enjoy a traditional beer and meal with you. The fireside is an enigmatic experience, a place where the orange flames dance against the black night sky, and where you can warm your blood with a good old South African favourite: brandy and coke.

Umkumbe feels like a secret, special spot—where the focus is on game viewing, traditional dining and camaraderie between rangers and guests. Simply put, it's a slice of safari heaven.

See www.umkumbe.co.za for further details.

OUT

In each edition of *The Intrepid Explorer*, editor Robbie Stammers shares two travel destinations that should not be missed

GONDWANA GAME RESERVE



For the perfect weekend safari break, with less than a four-hour drive from Cape Town along South Africa's popular Garden Route, the 11 000-hectare Gondwana Private Game Reserve offers a distinctive and luxurious malaria-free experience.

With awe-inspiring views of the Langeberg Mountains wherever you look, the indigenous fynbos vegetation cloaks the undulating valleys, adding vivid colour to a Big Five wilderness experience.

This exclusive reserve offers guests attentive service, superb cuisine, inspiring luxurious interiors, expert game rangers, and an array of activities such as horseback safaris. World-class tourist facilities and attractions on Gondwana's doorstep include championship golf courses, great swimming and surfing beaches, as well as attractive coastal towns.

We loved our afro-chic bush villa, which is one of five luxury villas on the property. These luxury self-catering 'country homes' are ideal for families and groups of friends who prefer having their own space with every possible item one could need. Sit on your private stoep, taking in the panoramic views, while being mesmerised by the rich birdlife and bountiful game.

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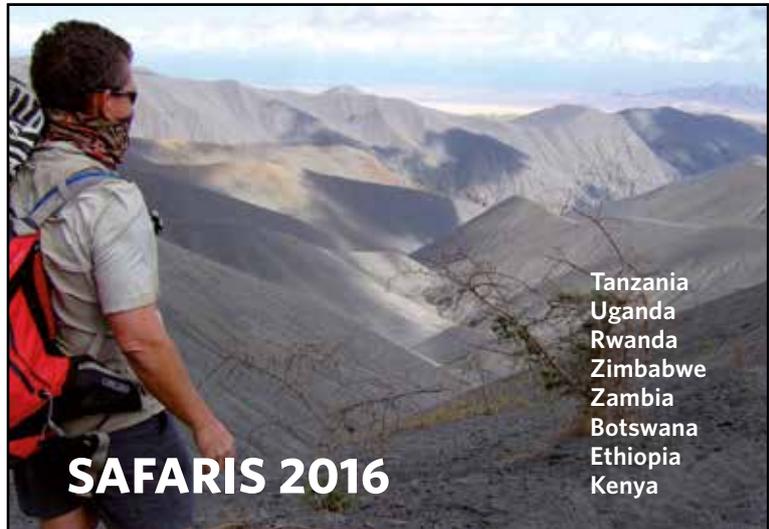


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