

SANParks accommodation opens to intra-provincial residents

South African National Parks (SANParks) will be opening its accommodation facilities, in the majority of its parks, as of 14 August 2020. Guided Overland Safari Vehicles (OSVs) will be permitted as soon as the regulations pertaining to their operations are gazetted.



Image via [SANParks](#) - SANParks

Mountain Zebra National Park

In addition, other parks are scheduled to open their accommodation as follows:

- Addo, Camdeboo, and Karoo National Parks – 17 August 2020

- Mountain Zebra National Park – 20 August 2020

This comes after the announcement made by Minister of Tourism, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane's on the response measures and directions for Alert Level 3 Lockdown as it pertains to the tourism industry. As per the Minister's announcement, overnight accommodation is only permissible for residents of the various provinces that the respective National Parks are located in. Interprovincial visitors will be prohibited entry into the parks.

SANParks CEO Fundisile Mketeni, says: "We are in the process of ensuring that the opening of our national parks for accommodation is done under the strictest health protocols to safeguard both our staff and guests... accommodation will not run at full capacity as we will employ a phased in approach to opening. Therefore our loyal guests can expect limited availability of accommodation in some parks at these beginning stages of our reopening, with a gradual increase in availability in the next few weeks."

Mitigating safety risks

Mketeni said that SANParks has implemented additional visitor management procedures in line with regulations and to further mitigate the risk of the spread of coronavirus.

Overnight guests will be required to provide proof of residence (municipal account or similar legally accepted form of verification of primary residence) at the time of booking accommodation and again when checking in. "No more than two people will be allowed per accommodation unit except for parents and children)."

Tour operators will be allowed to conduct guided tours in OSVs once regulations pertaining to their operations are gazetted; all OSV operators need to be registered with SANParks before they are permitted to enter the parks. Self-drive guests are still restricted to a 70% vehicle capacity as per the Department of Transport's regulations and the quota system still applies for day visitors.

The opening of visitor activities and tourist attractions in the parks will be in keeping with restrictions and aligned with the opening dates set out. As more information is gazetted SANParks will amend the protocols and inform guests.

"We look forward to welcoming all our loyal guests but we appeal to our colleagues, tourists and their friends and families' to travel responsibly. Enjoy the parks and please make sure you follow all health and safety protocols," concluded Mketeni.

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