

DISCOVERIES



1. A LOUNGE AT XIGERA SAFARI LODGE, NOW HOME TO A COLLECTION OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART AND DESIGN. 2. THE BAOBAB TREE HOUSE, WHERE GUESTS CAN SLEEP BENEATH THE STARS. 3. ONE OF 12 SUITES AT THE RESORT. 4. A VIEW OF THE MAIN LODGE, SET IN THE OKAVANGO DELTA.



Sleeping in a tree house above roaming elephants and lions might not seem like a dream night's rest. Unless, that is, you're beneath a canopy of stars at the Baobab, a three-story, open-air lodging at the newly refreshed Xigera Safari Lodge in Botswana's Okavango Delta. Rising 33 feet above the ground (and safely out of reach), the striking structure mimics the branching form of its namesake deciduous African tree, with steel limbs that will rust over time, blending into the bush while nodding to the landscapes of legendary South African painter Jacobus Hendrik Pierneef. This off-the-grid sleep-out is just a quick *mokoro*, or canoe, ride, from the main lodge, itself a gallery as much as a resort. Transformed by architect Anton de Kock and architectural designer Philip Fourie, the property now brims with treasures by some 30 African artists—including ceramics by Andile Dyalvane and Zizipho Poswa, bronze sculptures by Sarah Heinemann, and timber pieces by Adam Birch and David Krynauw. (Hotelier Toni Tollman and the Cape Town-based gallery Southern Guild also collaborated on the program.) Guests can recline on the Porky Hefer nests that punctuate the outdoor deck, gather around the hand-beaten copper fireplace in the lounge, or wake to the sight of birds passing overhead at the Baobab. Typically, people go on safari to be among animals, not art. At Xigera, one needn't choose. xigera.com —MARY HOLLAND

TRAVEL

Delta Status

Reimagined as a showcase for African art and design, Xigera puts a sophisticated spin on the safari vacation

COURTESY OF XIGERA SAFARI LODGE.