

Investors clamour for rare SA game reserve properties

South Africa is currently the fastest growing safari destination in Africa, with the private game reserves and lodges in the Greater Kruger area being the top choices for the wildlife-loving tourists who will happily spend \$5000 and more for their “Out of Africa” experience.



Source: Supplied.

And this surge in popularity is now also driving increased demand for the farms that make up the Timbavati and Klaserie reserves in particular, according to resident Chas Everitt area specialist Beer Roux.

“We are getting enquiries all the time now from local as well as international investors who are motivated to buy land here and play a role in preserving areas like this and animals that are under increasing threat from human development, as in other parts of the world.”

Timbavati and Klaserie are attracting the attention of such investors, he says, as their efforts to protect rhino, wild dogs, pangolin, ground hornbills and other endangered species gain global recognition – and because of the quality of their animal sightings.

“There are no fences between these reserves and the world-famous Kruger National Park, so they are part of one huge conservation area where the wildlife roams freely and the varied habitats enable visitors to see a vast array of animals and birds, including the Big Five, hippos, hyenas, anteaters, zebra, giraffe and many species of plains antelope.

“They and a few other large reserves in the Greater Kruger also aim to provide an authentic safari experience for mainly US tourists by maintaining lower vehicle and human densities, and enabling guests to participate in tracking and observing animals in their natural environments.”

As another plus, most lodges and camps in Klaserie and Timbavati are also only about an hour’s drive from the Hoedspruit Eastgate airport, after a direct flight from Cape Town or Johannesburg, so they are easily accessible.

Limited availability amidst high demand

But, says Roux, there are currently very few farms, homes or lodges available for investors to buy, despite the fact that Timbavati stretches over more than 53,000ha in total and Klaserie over more than 60,000ha. This is reflected in the fact that there have been less than a dozen sales in both reserves combined since 2020.

“The demand is really significant and we have a list of local and overseas buyers willing to spend between R30m and R120m for a farm here. But a lot of this land has been in family hands for a generation or two and now has several owners who must all agree to sell.”

However, Roux says he is aware that most owners in Klaserie and Timbavati are over 65 and may well be thinking about retiring elsewhere or boosting their retirement funds, and for those thinking of selling, his message is: there is demand from an international audience of affluent potential buyers.

He said Chas Everitt is able to tap into this global exposure thanks to its membership of Leading Estate Companies of the World, a network of more than 550 market-leading brokerages and 136,000 top real-estate professionals that operates in more than 70 countries.

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