



## **NXAI TRAVEL**

*Tailored safaris. Timeless landscapes.*

### **The Ultimate Astrophotography Safari in Kubu Island**

Embark on a rare photographic journey to one of Africa's most surreal locations - Kubu Island, rising like a dream from the endless white of the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans.

This 6-night guided astrophotography safari takes you far from modern life and deep into a world of ancient baobabs, granite boulders, and night skies so clear they feel unreal. With almost zero light pollution, Kubu Island is one of Botswana's premier locations for photographing the Milky Way, star trails, and dramatic silhouettes at sunrise and sunset.

Here, patience becomes poetry and the sky becomes your subject.

### **MAKGADIGADI PANS**

#### **An Otherworldly Destination**

Stretching across vast horizons, the Makgadikgadi Pans are among the largest salt flats on Earth. In the dry season, the land becomes a blinding white canvas beneath endless blue skies. When the rains arrive, the pans transform into green plains that draw birds, zebras, and wildebeest back to this ancient basin.

These pans were once part of a massive prehistoric lake; a place that sustained wildlife and early human life long before time was measured in calendars.

### **KUBU ISLAND**

#### **The Ultimate Stargazing Experience in The Lost Island of Baobabs**

Kubu Island rises from the salt like a mirage; a rocky outcrop crowned with centuries-old baobab trees and shaped by wind and time.

By day, the island glows beneath vast skies. By night, moonlight reflects off the white pans, casting natural shadows across the landscape and creating a scene that feels more lunar than earthly. Some of the baobabs here are believed to be over 3,000 years old; silent witnesses to the passing of empires, migrations, and stars.

There is no signal here.  
No electricity.  
Only sky, stone, and stillness.

Disconnecting from the world becomes part of the experience.

#### **Tour details:**

Tour duration: 7 days

Accommodation: Serviced mobile safari tents

Tour Type: Serviced Mobile Safari

Dates: 24-30 July 2026 and 24-30 July 2027



## NXAI TRAVEL

*Tailored safaris. Timeless landscapes.*

Group Size: Maximum 6 guests (minimum 4 required)

See route map

### TRIP SUMMARY

Day 1: Zoroga

Day 2,3 & 4: Makgadikgadi Pans National Park & Boteti River Front

Day 5 & 6: Zoroga

Day 7: (Departure)

### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Ancient baobabs as dramatic photographic foregrounds
- Night skies with exceptional visibility for Milky Way and star trails
- Vast salt pans creating striking sunrise and sunset compositions
- Granite boulders adding texture and scale to landscapes
- Luxury 4x4 transport and telescopes
- Use of astrophotography equipment and guided instruction
- Professional images of the tour and group
- Birding and photography at Nata Bird Sanctuary
- All meals, snacks, and selected drinks included

This safari caters to both beginners and advanced photographers. Guests should be comfortable operating their camera in manual mode. If you are unsure about your skill level or gear, please feel free to contact us and ask any questions.

### Learn about:

- **Creative Composition:** The basics and beyond, such as The Element Approach, Balancing Composition etc.
- **Basic to advanced techniques in digital landscape photography.** There are instructors (in groups of 4-6 participants) meaning that virtually all levels of photographer can be catered for.
- Workflow & digital asset management.
- How to create awe-inspiring astrophotography and star trail images.
- How to create panoramic images.
- How to create time lapses (optional)
- Advanced composition for landscape imagery
- Post-production using Lightroom, Capture One and Photoshop

### FOOD & CAMP LIFE

As the sun sets, enjoy a cold G&T while your guide prepares camp and dinner over open flames. Mornings begin with coffee and rusks, followed by a full African breakfast. Throughout the day, traditional meals, snacks, and drinks are served — including unlimited biltong for energy between shoots.



## NXAI TRAVEL

*Tailored safaris. Timeless landscapes.*

### Meals included:

Breakfast • Brunch • Lunch • Dinner • Snacks • Drinks

Dietary requirements can be catered for with prior notice (ideally when making your reservation).

The following dietary requirement(s) are served and/or catered for:

1. Regular (typically includes meat and fish)

### Travel Program

- Fly to Maun
- Pick up in Maun.
- One night travel stay at a Zoroga Expedition Camp
- Three nights at Kubu Island
- Two nights travel stop on route back to Maun with a day's trip to Nata Bird Sanctuary

### Accommodation

#### Zoroga Expedition Camp

Bushman-inspired huts with comfortable beds, lighting, shared ablutions, communal areas, and a swimming pool.

#### Kubu Island Campsite

Fully serviced tented accommodation with beds, lighting, tables, and power in a self-sustained temporary camp set among baobabs and granite outcrops.

### DAY-TO-DAY ITINERARY

#### Day 1: Zoroga (1 night)

Arrive in Maun and meet your guide before a scenic 5-hour road transfer to the edge of the Ntwetwe Pan. Settle into camp and prepare for your first night beneath desert skies.

*Camping Accommodation:* Zoroga Expedition Camp

#### Day 2,3 & 4: Lekhubu Island

*(3 nights)*

Depart early across the pans and arrive at Kubu Island by mid-morning. Receive introductory training in astrophotography and equipment use. Spend your days exploring the island's textures and trees, and your nights photographing the stars.

Sunsets, silhouettes, and star trails become your rhythm here.



## NXAI TRAVEL

*Tailored safaris. Timeless landscapes.*

Brief itinerary;

- Set up camp and start with exploring the island for photographic opportunities.
- Kubu Island – whole day of photography
- Exploring the island and capturing those amazing sunset images of Kubu.
- Photographic briefing

*Camping Accommodation: Lekhubu Campsites*

**Day 5 & 6: Zoroga**  
( 2 nights)

### **Zoroga Expedition Camp & Nata Bird Sanctuary**

Leave Kubu and stay overnight at Zoroga Expedition Camp. Whilst at Zoroga, you will get to do a day's trip to Nata Bird Sanctuary.

Leave Kubu Island and return to Zoroga. Enjoy a full-day excursion to Nata Bird Sanctuary, where thousands of waterbirds gather on nutrient-rich pans. Flamingos, pelicans, and raptors provide striking subjects by day, while evenings return you to desert stillness.

The Nata Bird Sanctuary is situated on the northeastern tip of the great Makgadikgadi Salt Pans, as such is one of Botswana's premier birding destinations.

Bird species that can be seen here include: the Grebe, the Cormorant, various Ducks, the Plovers, the Pelicans, pink-backed Pelican, the great white Pelican, the Avocet, the Black Winged Stilt, the Blacksmith Lapwing, the African Fish Eagle, the Pied Kingfisher, the Black-chested Snake-Eagle, the Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, the Martial Eagle, the Secretary bird and the African spoonbill just to name a few converge on the nutrient-rich waters of the pans. As the pan dries out, the Sanctuary hosts the largest congregation of Lesser Flamingos in Southern Africa – a flamboyant spectacle and a must for any photography and bird enthusiast.

*Camping Accommodation: Zoroga Expedition Camp*

**Day 7: Maun**  
( Departure / End of Tour)

After breakfast, transfer back to Maun International Airport for your onward journey.

Well... it has indeed been an adventure.

Go home.

Share your images.

Start planning your return.

***Zoroga Expedition Camp transfers depart Maun International Airport for camp at 14h00 and depart camp for the airport at 08h00. Any deviation from these times will incur a private transfer cost.***



## NXAI TRAVEL

*Tailored safaris. Timeless landscapes.*

### **What to bring Photography Equipment**

- A digital SLR camera, our hosts prefer to shoot with Full Frame cameras, but any interchangeable lens camera will work perfectly on the workshop including crop-sensor DSLRs, the new breed of mirrorless cameras and Micro Four Thirds cameras will also work perfectly well. We don't recommend using compact cameras because of their serious limitations or the 1" sensor cameras which don't have the same tolerances for landscape photography that M4/3s and larger sensor cameras have.
- A good quality tripod, preferably one not made of plastic. We can help you choose a suitable one if you don't already have a tripod.
- A wide-angle lens (Our hosts use wide and ultra-wide-wide-angle lens as a matter of preference). Large aperture wide angle lenses are ideal for astro-photography. We use 18mm f2.8 and 12mm f2.8 lenses primarily for astro work.
- A telephoto zoom lens, such as a 70-300 or 70-400 is nice to have for the Zoroga Expedition Camp leg of the trip, but for the most part we are shooting starry nightscapes which are the realm of wide-angle lenses.
- A camera remote (cable release) or intervalometer.
- For anyone serious about getting into landscape photography, a filter set consisting of graduated Neutral Density filters and a polarizer, is indispensable. We recommend investing in a set before arrival. Let us know if you need help choosing the right set.
- A laptop with editing software already loaded. Our team usually uses Lightroom and Adobe Photoshop with Nik plugins.
- A backup hard-drive for backing up images (it would be terrible to travel to Botswana only to lose all the images if a laptop hard-drive crashes).
- Blower and/or soft brush for cleaning dust off lenses and cameras