

Singita

SINGITA OPENS KWITONDA LODGE AND KATAZA HOUSE IN RWANDA - SUPPORTING GORILLA CONSERVATION



Singita, multi-award-winning hospitality and conservation brand, officially opens Singita Kwitonda Lodge and Kataza House in Rwanda on 1 August 2019. Set on 178 acres (72 hectares) on the edge of Volcanoes National Park, Kwitonda Lodge boasts eight luxurious suites, while Kataza House, an exclusive-use villa, features four spacious suites.

Singita has operated iconic ecotourism lodges and camps in Africa for the past 26 years. The brand's expansion into Rwanda supports the company's 100-year purpose to preserve and protect large areas of African wilderness for future generations. To this end, Singita has committed to extensive reforestation initiatives in Rwanda, helping to increase the range and numbers of endangered mountain gorillas in Volcanoes National Park. The opening of Singita Volcanoes National Park also brings much-needed attention to the plight of the gorillas and the urgent need to expand and protect their habitat.



The warm and welcoming spirit of the people of Rwanda embodies a sense of goodwill that encapsulates their remarkable recovery from a painful past. The gentle energy that drives them forward in their country's rebirth is truly inspiring. It is within this context that Singita is privileged to open Singita Volcanoes National Park, contributing significantly to conservation, community partnerships and ecotourism. To honour Rwanda's people and its fertile land, Singita has built one of the most sustainable lodges in Africa.

Singita Kwitonda Lodge, named after a legendary silverback gorilla known for his humility and gentle nature, is made up of a collection of small buildings laid out along the natural contours of the ground. The design and construction of the lodge and villa followed Singita's stringent sustainability principles which informed everything from site design and materials used to energy and water systems and interior design. The design team worked tirelessly with the local community to source most building materials in the immediate Musanze district, and a majority of the elements selected by interior designers, Cécile & Boyd and Hesse Kleinlog (HK) Studio, are made in Africa.

The lodge's on-site nursery, Akarabo (which means "little flower" in Kinyarwanda) has to date provided approximately 250,000 indigenous forest shrubs, bamboo shoots and trees for an extensive reforestation initiative.



Local translation of architecture and design

Conceptualised by GAPP Architects in collaboration with the interior design teams, the design takes its cue from Rwanda's cultural heritage and the enormous responsibility of protecting the strong, yet vulnerable gorillas. Bold, striking interiors, which are simultaneously nurturing, reflect the duality of the gorillas' nature; and this is also seen in the interplay of surprisingly strong art and furniture with pared-back modernity.

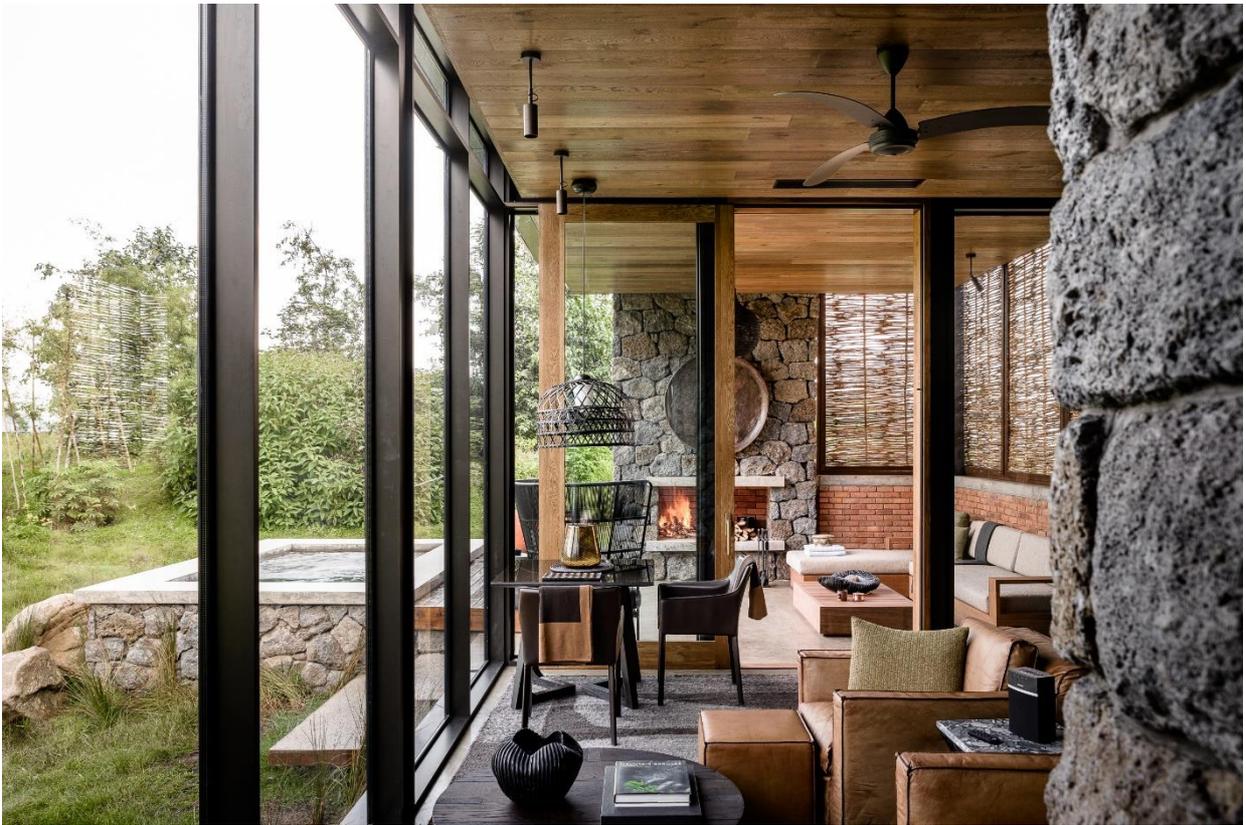
Natural elements like earth, mist, rain and lava are cleverly integrated into furniture pieces and linear artwork, while the vivid colour palette of lava black, khaki green, 'greige' and fiery orange echo the surrounding landscape which flows in through large windows throughout the lodge.

It's an inherently African sophistication that is long-lasting, polished and earthy.



Guest suites boast cosy couches, indoor and outdoor fireplaces and heated plunge pools, with breathtaking views of the Sabyinyo, Gahinga and Muhabura volcanoes. More than 500 local artisans and builders were involved in the project crafting volcanic walls, impressive woven ceilings and hand-fired terracotta brickwork, ensuring an authentic translation of local culture into key elements, adding a significant boost to local employment and businesses. The overall effect is strong and captivating, yet soothing, enhancing the serious, soul-centering experience of encountering gorilla families in their natural habitat.

GAPP Architects incorporated staggered lengths of volcanic stone walls, covered walkways and outdoor terraces ensuring the buildings have a strong sense of connection to the landscape. Organically shaped brick pods and large areas of reflective surfaces merge with the natural surrounds while large timber-framed picture-windows perfectly frame the volcanic peaks, providing welcoming window seats for guests to immerse themselves in the setting.



Singita Founder and Executive Chairman, Luke Bailes says, “It’s an absolute dream to expand our conservation footprint in Rwanda – a beautiful country with a remarkable conservation success story. Contributing to the Government’s enormous efforts to protect the country’s wildlife is both a privilege and a serious responsibility. We’re thrilled with the elegant, exceptionally sustainable lodges we’ve created here. They allow guests to connect deeply with nature in the heart of Africa, after a humbling encounter with the gorillas.”



Farm-to-table food journey

Featuring largely vegetable-based dishes and local Rwandan favourites, the on-site herb and fruit garden supplies the lodge kitchens with an array of fresh ingredients, reflected in a farm-to-table approach to the menu. Other highlights of the food journey include tailor-made trekking lunchboxes, flexible mealtimes and a signature “bar-deli” which offers fresh fruit and small snacks, enabling guests to help themselves throughout the day.

For guests, gorilla trekking is a major drawcard, and Singita situated less than ten minutes from Volcanoes National Park headquarters, makes this life-changing experience incredibly accessible. A variety of technical gear and clothing for the hike is housed in the Gear Room at Kwitonda Lodge and Kataza House. On return, guests have ample time to enjoy a soothing massage in the sanctuary of their suites, purposefully designed for nurturing, reflection and comfort. Apart from thrilling gorilla treks, other activities include golden monkey walks, day tours to the vibrant capital city, Kigali – including a visit to the Genocide Memorial – trips to the Musanze Caves, Nyungwe National Park, Lake Kivu or a local community tour.

Singita Volcanoes National Park is a comfortable 2.5-hour road transfer from Kigali International Airport alternatively helicopters transfers are available to the lodge. Rates for suites at Singita Kwitonda Lodge range between \$1,495-\$1,750 per person per night; or from \$6,877 per night for the exclusive-use Kataza House villa in Green Season. Rates are fully inclusive, however excludes in-room massages, gorilla-trekking permits and extras, which Singita can book prior to travel.

-ENDS-

Note to Editors:

Singita is a conservation brand that has been preserving African wilderness for the past 26 years, offering guests an exceptional safari experience with 15 luxury, award-winning lodges and camps across six regions. In partnership with non-profit Funds & Trusts who implement strategic conservation projects in each region, Singita’s 100-year purpose is to preserve and protect large areas of African wilderness for future generations.

**Children under the age of 15, who are unable to participate in gorilla treks, will be cared for at the lodge with a variety of supervised educational activities with our on-site conservation specialists.*

Press Release

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