



f t v

# I LEAVE

- Home
- How is? **missed**
- I'm leaving Vlog
- Additional
- Broadcasts NPO Start

< How is?



## GROETE UIT SUID-AFRIKA

Ik Vertrek

# How are Edwin and Kirsten doing in the wilds of South Africa?

I Depart / 25 Nov 2021



**In the broadcast of November 25, 2021 we follow the adventure of Edwin and Kirsten Autsema who emigrate to their dream destination South Africa. In Hoedspruit, close to the Kruger Park, the couple takes over two lodges to live in and rent out. How are they now among the wild animals?**

## Update The Baobab Lodge - Hoedspruit

We are doing very well. We enjoy nature and the animals around us, the guests and the contacts we already have around us. Our son Ruben came to visit us here for a few weeks as a surprise. He signed the project to be (re)built and saw the beginning last year. He is therefore proud of how it all looks now.

### South African life

Between all the work we enjoy South African life and do not miss Dutch life. The temperature is higher here and that gives energy. The end result of the renovation project is really fantastic and it is a wonderful place to stay among the wild animals. Living here and enjoying it is way beyond our expectations.

The past year and a half have flown by. The first period of trial run of the lodge, different languages and cultures, a completely different climate, wild animals and the contrasts between rich and poor provided enough challenge next to the construction project. We started the major renovation in May. Because there were no guests during the Covid period, we thought it better to close the lodge. As a result, the guests were not bothered by the renovation problems and the workmen could go about their business. Contrary to what was originally planned, we chose to immediately renovate everything that was on our wish list.



## **African mentality**

In the Netherlands we are well known for managing construction workers in construction projects. But that's different here. This took a lot of getting used to for us. These are examples where you think you're kidding. But it is serious and have learned to deal with this. Some examples:

- If one had received a salary at the end of the month, there was a lot of drinking that weekend. On Monday they simply did not show up without signing out. 1 or 2 days later they just show up at work again as if it were the most natural thing in the world.
- No wall could be measured, because the person to whom he had lent his pencil had that day off.
- Everything is available here in the shops. But we had to get used to it when limited stock runs out and it can take weeks before it's back in stock. Even if you ordered it.
- Kirsten often knew more about construction than the construction workers. But taking on something from a woman on the construction site took time.

The contractor had put a new foreman on our project, everything was new to him. The contractor therefore told him that if there were any construction / technical questions, he should ask us. He often only came for a few hours a week. That in itself was not a bad thing. But in combination with the emigration, the (technical) language, the working method, the culture habits, working days from 6 am to 10 pm, this became very much. At the end of July we were so wrecked that our energy level was 0.

This was a good cocktail to run into Corona. Because of this we were out of the running for a while and we were able to sleep and recover a lot. We went back to the Netherlands for a while to enjoy Mendel and Sophie's wedding. After that, we were able to start the final construction phase with a lot of energy and in the end the contractor took care of everything and all construction work was completed. We now have two gardeners, Danny and Fumo. They really are handymen. We found them through Facebook. And we recently also have a new cleaning lady, her name is Alina.



**home is where your heart is  
and it's here now**

The pavement is ready and the desert garden in the lodge has since been turned into an oasis in the bush complete with lighting for the dark hours. The end result is really fantastic and it is a wonderful place to stay among the wild animals.

We really enjoy the contact with the guests. And the guests are amazed that you can see so many beautiful animals from your suite. The zebras, giraffes and Nyalas visit our lodge daily. So special to be able to live in between.

The dogs Jenthe and Xayah are also doing very well. In the beginning, all the smells and sounds were new to them. This caused a lot of anxiety. They are now used to this. They are often with us at the lodge and prefer to be outside and enjoy everything. Since the dogs are at the lodge, the monkeys stay at a greater distance, but they are back when the dogs are home. The wild boars will never be their friends. That's a good thing.

