



Why Keeping Your Distance Works Best on Walking Safaris with African Bush Camps

Calvet Nkomo, head guide at award-winning Somalisa Camp, knows how to keep his distance from wildlife in Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe

Keeping a healthy distance apart is a priority for people all over the world these days. But deep in the bush of Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe, it has been front-of-mind for Calvet Nkomo for decades. As head guide of award-winning [Somalisa Camp](#), one of 15 luxury tented bush camps and lodges offered by [African Bush Camps \(ABC\)](#) across Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, Nkomo is a natural at giving denizens of the bush their space while leading walking safaris for guests to appreciate the beauty and majesty of the wildlife in their midst.

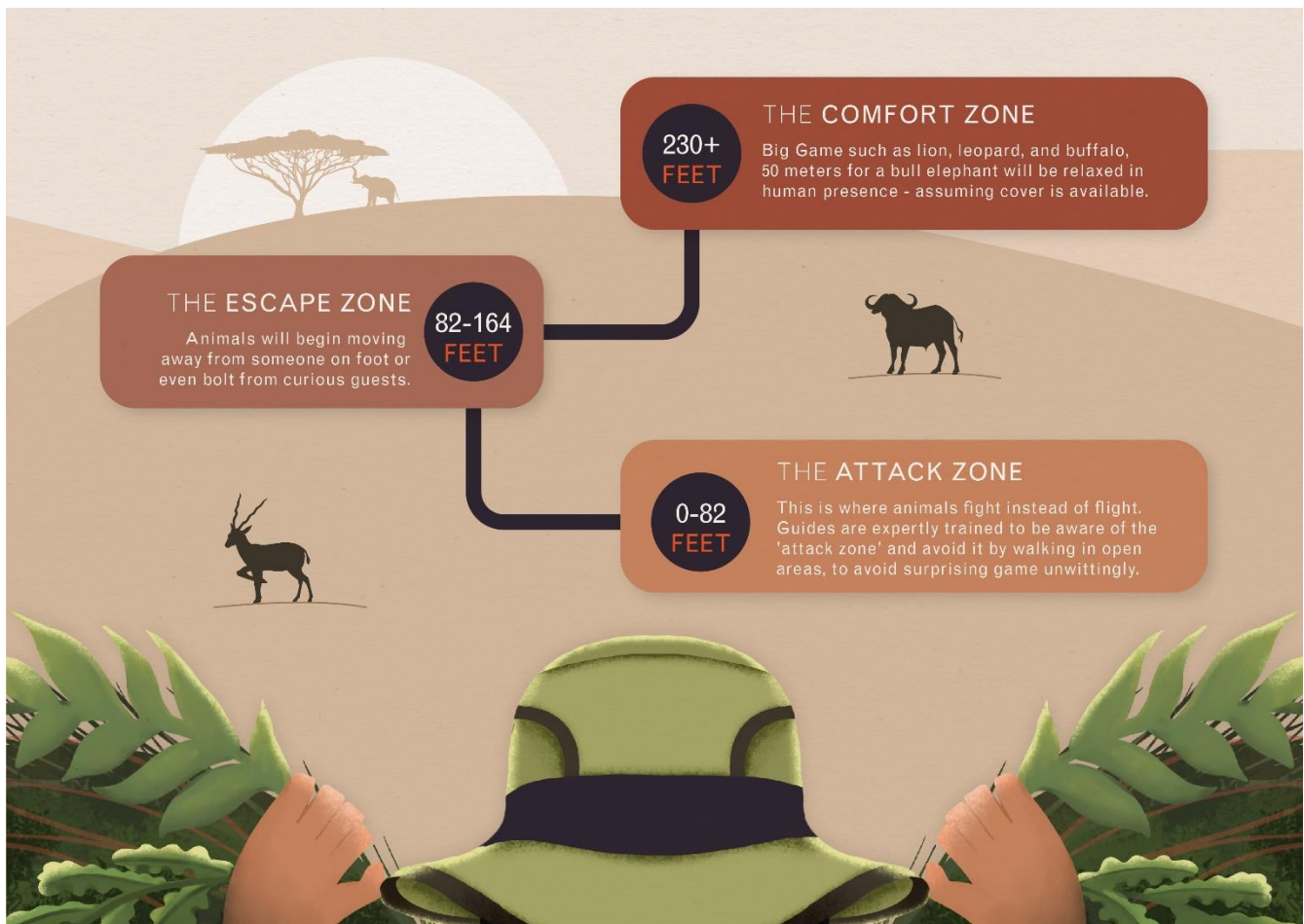
Born in Halisupi, Zimbabwe, Nkomo was raised by his grandparents after his mother was unable to nurse him. The two gave the youngster goat and cow's milk, plenty of love and care, and, as he grew, the African name Ndalaboy – “big boy” grew on him. His grandfather, Madimabi Mike Sibanda, was a role model who among other things taught Nkomo the skills to live by.

A warm, welcoming, and larger-than-life spirit who smiles broadly between sentences and enjoys singing traditional songs, Nkomo, 54, has been guiding since 1995. He joined ABC in Zimbabwe in 2012. Nkomo has long since become familiar with the prides of lions roaming Hwange. “I know them by name and consider them family,” he says, noting in particular Cecil's pride, Africa's true Lion King who, after being tracked by collar and extensively researched, became so prominent that travelers began descending upon Zimbabwe just to see him. An American big-game hunter killed Cecil in 2015, a big blow to conservation and Hwange National Park visitors alike. Nowadays, travelers come to see Cecil's decedents, who roam the park in abundance.

Keep Your Distance

According to Nkomo, there are three “zones” of distance guides must recognize when leading guests to view game on walking safaris in the bush:

- For best viewing, stick to a **“comfort zone”** of not less than 70 meters (230 feet) for big game such as lion, leopard, and buffalo, or 50 meters (164 feet) for a bull elephant – assuming cover is available. A little far? “Not really,” Nkomo says with a big laugh. “That is what good eyesight and optics are for.”
- The **“escape zone”** is from 25-50 meters (82-164 feet), at which point animals will begin moving or even bolt away from curious guests. “That’s too close for good viewing. Your presence may be disturbing to animals, but you’ll be safe.”
- Guides always walk in open areas to avoid surprising game unwittingly. Guests don’t need to be concerned, but guides are always aware of the **“attack zone,”** which is a distance to wildlife of less than 25 meters (up to 82 feet). “I’ve never come this close,” says Nkomo, “there is no reason to approach wildlife this closely.”



Named “Zimbabwe’s Leading Tented Safari Camp” by World Travel Awards 2019, Somalisa Camp offers amazing views of the beautiful golden savannah of Hwange, and endless possibilities for travelers to soak up the scenery

on walking safaris, game drives, birding, and cultural visits. Likely wildlife sightings for guests include elephant, kudu, sable antelope, zebra, wildebeest, gemsbok, and rare and endangered roan antelope, as well as buffalo, giraffe, lion, leopard, hyena, and more. As at every ABC camp, all outings within the camp's private concession or national parks are led by qualified ABC guides who are excited to share their knowledge and passion for the bush they call home.

Somalisa Camp welcome guests age 7 and over year-round. Take advantage of African Bush Camps' **"Once in a Lifetime"** safari special and **Book Now, Travel Later**.

- 3+ Night Rate: USD380 per person per night
- 6+ Night Rate: USD361 per person per night
- 9+ Night Rate: USD342 per person per night

For rate details for 2020-2021, please [view these offers](#).

For more information on Somalisa Camp or to make reservations at any African Bush Camps destination, visit <https://africanbushcamps.com/>

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About African Bush Camps

African Bush Camps (ABC) is a 100% owner-run, African-based safari company designed to delight adventure travelers with authentic safari experiences amid untamed wilderness across Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. Operations are always focused on the guests, with 15 luxury tented bush camps and lodges, offering seamless safari experiences with internal flights, food, drinks, and activities included. **African Bush Camps** promotes and influences travel to Africa on a global scale while operating with a strong focus on conservation, and an environmentally sustainable footprint that celebrates the culture of communities in the areas in which it operates.

The **African Bush Camps Foundation** is a nonprofit organization focused on conservation, education, and empowerment for the communities that surround the company's camp locations. Launched in 2006, the Foundation operates through a multi-faceted partnership with the company, which donates \$10 to the Foundation for every bed night accommodated in each of its camps. All donations go directly to community-based development projects initiated by the Foundation. Since opening, the Foundation has spearheaded 72 community projects across Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia; 42 of those projects are currently in operation under the Foundation's wing.

African Bush Camps was founded in 2006 by **Beks Ndlovu**, a professional safari guide born and raised in the village of Luparie on the outskirts of Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe. From the start of operations, Ndlovu's mission has been to operate a portfolio of luxury tented camps and lodges across Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia that reincarnate the fantasy of 'Old Untouched Africa,' while treating guests to authentic and adventurous professional guide-led experiences and bespoke safaris that can only be found in the bush.