

WORD OF MOUTH

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Into THE WILD

A clutch of chic new lodges across southern and east Africa is raising the bar for safari style

In Zimbabwe, &Beyond has just reopened a long-abandoned lodge, now **&Beyond Matetsi River Lodge** (doubles from AED 3489; 0027-11-809 4300, andbeyond.com), about 40km upstream from Victoria Falls, where guests check in to one of nine contemporary suites before going for a dip in a 20m pool running alongside the Zambezi River. Over in the Ngorongoro Crater region of Tanzania, **Asilia's The Highlands** (doubles from AED 3,287; 0027-21-418 0468, asiliaafrica.com) opened in June and has taken every existing cliché of what you might think a tented camp should look like and tossed it to the wind: eight futuristic pod-like tents cut a sleek figure across the slopes of the Olmoti volcano, maximising views

from each domed domicile (for more on *The Highlands*, see p 18). And plenty of news out of South Africa these days. Reigning operator Singita is continuing its efforts to revamp its already sumptuous retreats; this year, they unveiled a stunning new look for long-time Kruger National Park favourite **Singita Lebombo** (doubles from AED 10,840; 0027-21-683 3424, singita.com), lightening colours, opening up the rooms and adding a new 25m pool and more common areas. And in the Welgevonden Reserve, the new **Mhondoro Game Lodge** (doubles from AED 10,840; 0027-14-755 4917, mhondoro.com) incorporates furniture and décor from cutting-edge South African design stars like Vogel, Anthea and Michael Methven.

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Take a helicopter ride over Victoria Falls near &Beyond Matetsi River Lodge