



Home of the
ELEPHANT WHISPERER

Thula Thula Private Game Reserve



It was a chance encounter between a glamorous Parisian and a wildlife conservationist from South Africa. Meeting in a London taxi queue – the rest, as they say, is history, or in this case, the magnificent Thula Thula Private Game Reserve, where Lawrence and Françoise Anthony have created a sanctuary for wildlife and guests.

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World-famous for his daring and remarkable 2003 rescue of zoo animals in war-stricken Baghdad, Lawrence was awarded the highly prestigious *Earth Day Medal* and the *Earth Day Award* by the United Nations in 2007. The recollection of his adventure is scripted in his first book, *Babylon's Ark* (published in 2006), and a motion picture which will portray his heroic tale is currently under negotiation. The book has been published in English, Japanese and Korean and will soon be available in French. Awarded the prestigious *American Library Association [Booklist] Editors Choice* award last year in the category 'Adult Books for Young Adults,' the book is a compelling read of courage in the face of adversity.

A passionate conservationist and environmentalist, Lawrence has also made headlines with his recent Northern White rhinoceros protection

efforts in Uganda. One of his most acclaimed achievements however, has been on his home turf in Zululand, South Africa. Lawrence's unique ability to rehabilitate a herd of seven rogue African elephants, has earned him the epithet of the 'Elephant Whisperer.' His unique relationship with the matriarch Nana, and her herd, remains one of the main draw cards that compels tourists and locals to visit Thula Thula.

Lawrence's second book, *The Elephant Whisperer*, explores this extraordinary relationship and recounts the moving tale of his challenge to save the herd from certain execution. In 1999, Lawrence was approached and asked to take on the problematic elephants from Mpumalanga. With the knowledge that he was their last chance of survival, he agreed, but before arrangements could be finalised, the animals – notorious escape artists – broke free and the matriarch and her baby



were tragically shot. Traumatized and angry, the remaining elephants were moved to Thula Thula as planned, but no sooner had they arrived, then they began planning their next escape.

As Lawrence battled tirelessly to create a bond with the herd, he realised that they had a lot to teach him about life, loyalty and freedom. The book, which is set against the background of life in Thula Thula, combines exotic characters and unforgettable wildlife. Published by Pan MacMillan, *The Elephant Whisperer* will be released on 5th June 2009 in the UK and British Commonwealth and in the USA on 10th September 2009.

Lawrence and Francoise's aptly-named game reserve Thula Thula, means 'peace and tranquility'

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in Zulu. Steeped in history, the majestic landscape was once the hunting grounds of the mighty Zulu Warrior, King Shaka. The Nseleni River at Thula Thula symbolises the first meeting between Shaka and his father, Senzangakhona, which set the stage for the creation of the Zulu Nation.

The reserve abounds with wildlife, including the now-thriving breeding herd of elephant, the first to roam the land in over a century. It is to this elephant herd that the five-star Elephant Safari Lodge in Thula Thula owes its name. Offering an exclusive bush getaway experience, the tastefully appointed suites are decorated in an Afro-Colonial style in keeping with the reserve's natural heritage. The Suite Royale and the Suite Imperiale are exquisite in detail and design, providing the perfect ambience for celebrating honeymoons and other special occasions. Bringing the warmth and feel of the bushveld indoors, the luxury Tented Camp offers all requisite creature comforts, complete with Victorian en suite bathrooms, ideal for a relaxed family breakaway.

Co-owner and chef, Francoise Anthony, is every bit as passionate about game and wildlife as she is about life itself. Revered as one of Zululand's foremost gourmet destinations, French-trained Francoise entertains with a gastronomic fusion of exotic Franco-African flavours, created with passion and flair. Choose from a selection of seafood, venison and vegetarian dishes such as seafood bouillabaisse Creole, oxtail bourguignon with garlic crushed potato, three cheese and pesto feuilleté on tomato compote, venison terrine with marula jelly and fillet of Impala served on sweet potato cake with red wine and bacon sauce. This eclectic menu is guaranteed to delight and satisfy even the most discerning gourmet.

An easy two hour drive from Durban or

approximately five hours from Johannesburg, and situated in a malaria free area, Thula Thula is the ultimate destination to experience a true taste of Africa. ❖

For further information contact Thula Thula Private Game Reserve on + 27 35 792 8322 or visit www.thulathula.com.

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* Cost per SMS is R3. Competition closes 31st October 2009. By entering this competition, you consent to receiving electronic information pertaining to *Miladys*. *Terms and Conditions apply. Prize excludes travel costs to and from the lodge.