

Skukuza Camp, Kruger National Park – Access for Guests with Mobility Challenges





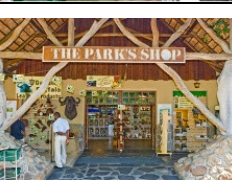
Skukuza is the largest rest camp in Kruger National Park and is located on the southern bank of the Sabie River. The camp can be accessed via any one of the southern gates in the park, with Paul Kruger Gate (12km) being the closest to the camp, but Phabeni (39km), Numbi (56km) and Malelane (62km) Gates all being popular alternatives. The camp is set in riverine woodland but the surrounding vegetation is thornveld/marula savannah, with most of the park’s game potentially found in the area. The Sabie River is particularly renowned for leopard sightings.

The camp has 238 **accommodation units** and 80 campsites. The accommodation includes about 180 bungalows, 8 of which are adapted for use by guests with mobility impairment. Two of these units have baths with grab-rails; the other 6 have roll-in showers. There are also 12 luxury riverside bungalows, 2 of which have roll-in showers and 15 guest cottages (one adapted for guests with mobility challenges and 4 guest houses, 2 of which have rooms equipped with ablution facilities suitable for wheelchair users.

Other facilities: The camp is equipped with several catering facilities (see below), a library and museum, an auditorium, conference facilities, a bank, a post office, a shop, petrol pumps, car wash, swimming pools, an environmental education centre and an outdoor film viewing area. Most of these facilities are accessible to guests in wheelchairs and there are accessible toilets at reception, by the main restaurant/shop complex and at the Selati Train restaurant. Immediately east of camp is the Skukuza Day-visitor area, which has its own pool and tuck shop and accessible public toilets, while immediately west of camp is a substantial staff village for all the park’s officials, and other infrastructure, of which the golf course, nursery and a church can be accessed by park visitors.

	<p>Visitors with reserved accommodation need to first check in at reception and retrieve their key. There are 2 drop curves in the parking area and although there are many parking bays there are none that are designated for wheelchair users. There are ramps into reception and most other buildings in the complex. There is also an accessible toilet.</p>
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Skukuza has a variety of food and retail facilities all of which are ramped and fully accessible, except the bar in the train carriage where help will be needed up a step. There are unisex accessible toilets by all these facilities:

<p>A take-away deli,</p>			
	<p>the main restaurant and outside restaurant deck overlooking the river,</p>		
		<p>a more casual restaurant at the old Selati Railway Station,</p>	
			<p>and a shop selling groceries and curios.</p>

Skukuza Accommodation



Bungalow 2



Bungalow 179



Bungalow 131

There are 8 **accessible standard bungalows** in Skukuza, all with 2 single beds and en-suite ablutions, but 6 with roll-in showers (#s 1, 2, 110, 111, 130 & 131 – all coded BD2Z) and 2 with baths with grab rails (178 & 179 – code BG2ZE). The units with baths also have no cooking facilities inside the unit; instead its residents must travel to a communal cooking and washing up block some 40m away down the road towards the river.

Bungalows with Roll-in Showers

Bungalows 110, 111, 130 & 131 are grouped together in the east of the camp – just above the lower part of the camping site. Bungalows 1 & 2 are to the west of the camp. All 6 units are similar in design and are comfortable units. Those in the east are on flat ground, but 1 & 2 are on a slope (see photo above), which affects the parking space in particular.



All these units have an open veranda with a table (with sufficient clearance), 2 chairs, a fridge, hotplate and sink and low and high cupboards. Wheelchair users may need help with getting cutlery and crockery out of the top cupboards



Inside the units have 2 beds and plenty of space in the bedroom chamber. There is a deep wardrobe and a small bench



One disappointing thing in some (not all) of these units is that the coat hooks and air-con-switch are too high up the wall. In others they have been purposefully lowered. Not ideal consistency in units intended for use by wheelchair guests!



The units' en-suite ablutions have an excellent toilet set up as the basin is easily in reach for a person on the toilet. The mirror and shaving plugs are also well positioned. The roll-in showers are not as well designed though, as the sliding detachable shower is on the opposite wall to the fold-down seat making it difficult to reach



Bungalows with baths

Bungalows 178 & 179 are very attractively painted in African style art, making them popular with guests, particularly those who intend eating in the restaurants most of the time. These bungalows with baths have





enclosed verandas (useful against marauding monkeys and baboons) with a cupboard, table and 2 chairs. The communal cooking and washing facility (below right) is a short distance away.



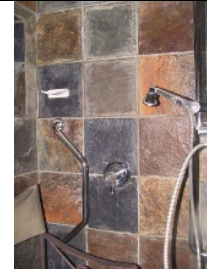
In the bedroom chamber there are 2 beds, a wardrobe, a wash basin, a small table and an air-conditioner and there is plenty of space for a wheelchair user to get around.



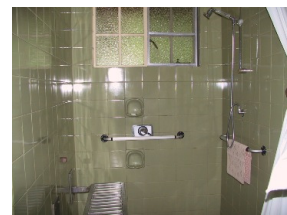
The ablutions of these bungalows are very cramped and the bath is a small one. Large men in particular will battle to get in and out of the bath. With the basin in the bedroom chamber there is no water source within reach of the toilet. There is only a grab rail on the adjacent wall and not at the rear of the toilet.



Luxury Riverside Bungalows - Two of these units have ramped access, grab rails next to the toilet and roll-in shower. Unfortunately there is no fold-down seat in the shower, so guests in wheelchairs may want to use one of the chairs from the unit's veranda. The units not only have a river view, but also have a limited channel television, as well as cooking and washing facilities.



Other Accessible Accommodation – One of the guest cottages (unit 226) has ramped access and one of its two en-suite bathrooms is equipped for guests in wheelchairs. The roll-in shower (right) has the seat and shower on opposite walls making it difficult to reach once a person is on the seat. The toilet (below left) has grab-rails in the correct places but it would be better if the basin was a little closer to the toilet. Two of Guest Houses – Nyathi and Waterkant 1 (below right) have ramped access and one of their 4 rooms has a bathroom equipped for wheelchair guests and there is a choice of bath and roll-in shower in these luxury units.



Accessible Activities in Skukuza: One of Skukuza's outstanding attractions is the **Stevenson-Hamilton Memorial Centre** (below left) which houses an impressive collection of wildlife books and papers (below centre right) and historical and wildlife artifacts. Stevenson-Hamilton was the first warden of the park. Attractions include: the skin of the lion that attacked ranger Harry Wolhuter and that he killed with a pocket knife (below right). The library is easily accessed via a wide ramp (below centre left).



The **riverside trail** is also ideal for wheelchairs, being wide, smooth and firm. This trail runs along the Sabie River frontage and allows excellent views of all sorts of animals and birds. The path is a little steep in places, so frailer wheelchair users may require a push in places.

There is a resident **doctor** (right) in Skukuza and the rooms are fitted with a ramp. There are also 2 **swimming pools** (far-right), but although a wheelchair user can get to the pool-side there are no railings to help a person get into and out of the water



Accessible Activities nearby Skukuza:



The Skukuza **Day Visitor Centre** (bordering the main camp, but accessed via a 2km drive from camp) has ramped access, an accessible ablution, a kiosk, swimming pool and several picnic tables (only some of which are accessible to wheelchairs) One of the available activities from all camps are the park run **guided game drives** (left), but wheelchair users will currently have to be lifted on and off the vehicle. It is often easier to sit in front with the driver as the lift is then not as high. Such game drives (particularly the night drives) can be very rewarding.

On the western side of the Skukuza staff village, which borders the main camp, next to the golf course is the wonderful **Skukuza indigenous nursery**. Much of the nursery is accessible to wheelchair users with concrete pathways, although in places the aisles are too narrow.



Also at the nursery is the **Skukuza Wetlands Boardwalk** and this is the ideal trail for people in wheelchairs to experience nature at close quarters.



2km from the nursery and about 5km from Skukuza by road is the **Lake Panic Bird Hide**. Inside the hide there are gaps in the benches where wheelchair users can view from, although unlike some of the newer hides there is not leg clearance under the viewing slot. The pathway into the hide is sandy in places and is prone to erosion after heavy summer rain, and at times wheelchair users may require assistance, but with or without help it is ideal for close-up viewing of hippos, crocodiles, waterbirds and other wildlife.

