



Gourmet safaris

For stellar food in stunning natural surroundings, head out on one of these (three) adventures...

South Africa

Chefs Warehouse & Canteen, run by Liam Tomlin, is one of Cape Town's hottest tables. You'll need to go slightly further off the beaten track to sample Tomlin's less familiar menus, however; the Irish-born chef has recently translated his tapas concept to the bush at **Singita Lebombo Lodge** (*singita.com*).

Set on a 33,000-acre concession in Kruger National Park, the lodge re-launched last year with Tomlin in charge of the food. A vibrant, open-plan kitchen and dine-when-you-like approach keeps things casual, though post-game-drive drinks and dinners under the stars are still a focus.

Much of the produce served is locally grown or sourced; small plates include ostrich tartare with ponzu and garlic. Guests can also visit Singita Lebombo's School of Cooking as part of a community tour. Set up 10 years ago to teach catering and other skills, its students now also benefit from Tomlin's expertise.

Seven-night stays cost from £8,800pp, including flights, full-board accommodation and safari activities (*scottddunn.com*)

India

Overlooking one of the world's most renowned tiger-viewing spots, **Banjaar Tola**, in India's Kanha National Park, is a collection of tented guest suites on raised wooden platforms with glass and canvas walls, bamboo floors, hand-printed textiles and intricate stone carvings.

Food is almost as big a draw as the tigers. Start with a traditional Indian breakfast (kathi rolls filled with cottage cheese, mint and onions; flat saffron rice with fresh vegetables; homemade lassis) then spend an afternoon taking an informal cooking lesson with the camp's chef.

In the evenings, food is served on a deck by the Banjaar river or, lit by lanterns, in the surrounding forest – green salads with clay-roast chicken, perhaps, meat sautéed in cinnamon with ground spices or chicken cooked with spinach, cloves and black cardamom. Leave space, though, for lentil pancakes with banana and butterscotch sauce.

Rates start at £132 per person per night, b&b (*tajhotels.com/banjaartola*)



Italy

Swoon-worthy scenery and centuries of art and architecture contribute to the allure of Tuscany but so, too, does its rich culinary heritage. If you want to indulge the last in depth, sign up for a one-day walking safari with **Gusto Evoluto**.

Set up by Tuscan chef Paolo Coluccio, visitors are introduced to the Tuscan table via rambles through the UNESCO World Heritage-listed landscape of Southern Tuscany's Val d'Orcia.

This may not be a traditional, wildlife-focused safari, but it promises the chance to get up close to a culinary big five as you wander through fields of wild flowers and herbs; stopping off for brunch at a farm, perhaps, visiting olive oil and cheese producers, detouring to a local food festival and stopping off at a cookery school to join a pasta-perfecting class.

Seven-hour walking safaris cost from €120pp, including guide, tastings and cooking classes (*gustoevoluto.com*). **For added safari atmosphere, camping can be booked at one of the visited farms** (*podereilcasale.com*)

