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Tswalu Kalahari wins coveted Spa Award

Tswalu Kalahari Spa has won the "Best Safari Spa Award" in the 2011 Les Nouvelles Esthétiques Spa Awards. Tswalu Spa Manager Corli Schoeman was named runner up in the "Spa Management Excellence Award".

Russel Binks, MD of Tswalu Kalahari, said that the awards are a huge boost to South Africa's biggest privately-owned game reserve.

"It's wonderful to receive such positive recognition for what we are doing at Tswalu," he said. "We completed a refurbishment of the spa last year and appointed Corli as the new spa manager shortly afterwards. She immediately revamped the treatment menu and has done wonders in training a local therapist, as well as ensuring the spa is an integral part of the Tswalu experience."

Managing Editor of Les Nouvelles Esthétiques, Dr Nadine de Freitas, said that the Spa Awards, now in their 7th year, are flourishing in an internationally growing market place.

"The stature of the awards means that we can provide South African and international spa visitors and media with a comprehensive choice of award-winning spas and a reliable source and spa information and recommendations, within South Africa," she explains.

"In judging the spas, we look for the personalised aspects in the spa visit, in addition to absolute attention to detail, impeccable spa standards and faultless service excellence, which all adds up to a spa experience which is beyond the client's

expectations."

The 2011 Spa Awards consists of five categories, namely Boutique Hotel Spas, Day Spa, Resort/Hotel Spa, Unique Spa Concept and Safari Spa categories. **Says Dr de Freitas: "The Safari Spa Category is our international flagship category as it represents the essence of Africa, through the combination of safari and spas. Tswalu Spa sets a benchmark for safari spas in South Africa."**

The Spa Management Excellence Award is a new award this year, introduced to recognise excellence in spa management, and managers who go beyond the call of duty.

"Corli has reformed the Tswalu Kalahari Spa completely. She delights her clients through her knowledge and care, and is constantly praised for being quite magical at what she does. Not only is she exceptional at her chosen profession, but her enthusiasm and experience is something she likes to share with others - she has successfully trained and mentored Betty Ntaolong, a 33-year old waitress, so that she was able to qualify in Holistic Massage, and is now working as a spa therapist at Tswalu" says Binks.

Tswalu Kalahari Spa is a combination of sensual spaces which combine to create an inspirational venue for what must be one of the most unusual spa experiences in Africa. Designed to enhance the natural beauty of the Kalahari and take advantage of the superb climate, the outdoor treatment area is within an indigenous spa garden where guests may find the occasional antelope grazing alongside them and be lulled into a deep state of relaxation by the sound of birdsong. Surrounded by endless blue skies and the unique vegetation of the Green Kalahari, guests who indulge in the authentic signature massages performed by local therapists, will discover the Spa's

ethos of "closer to the land, closer to the people." The indoor spa area is a natural extension of the earth, inspired by nature and the splendour of the Kalahari, with natural finishes and fabrics and simple spaces which together create a sense of tranquility and barefoot elegance. Guests may also choose to have their treatments at an outdoor tsala, where a rustic structure protects one from the elements and is positioned to give a bird's eye view of the open grasslands of the reserve against the backdrop of the Korannaberg Mountain range.

Treatments at Tswalu Spa include exfoliation treatments using fine red Kalahari dune sand or desert mineral crystals from the natural mineral rich salt pans of the Kalahari, infused with plant-based emollient rich aromatic oils.

About Tswalu Kalahari

Tswalu Kalahari is South Africa's largest private game reserve, covering an area of over 100,000 hectares in the "Green Kalahari" of the Northern Cape. Owned by the Oppenheimer family, this vast and magical landscape is the ancestral home of the San people and conservation is its first priority. Nicky Oppenheimer's vision is simply to "restore the Kalahari to itself".

With the emphasis on conversation tourism, Tswalu is able to offer superlative game and sightings of some of South Africa's rarest and most extraordinary wildlife, including the desert black rhino, black-maned Kalahari lions, meerkats, cheetah, rare antelope, and the elusive aardvark, aardwolf, pangolin and porcupine.

Catering for just 30 guests in two luxury lodges, the emphasis is on privacy, flexibility and exclusivity, and your safari experience is tailored to suit you.

Design your own itinerary with game drives, bush walks and horseback safaris, animal encounters, star-gazing and sleep-outs. Indulge in spa treatments in the Indigenous Spa Garden. Dine in the bush, the Boma, or on your own private deck. Enjoy sundowners in the dunes.

Families are welcome and children will revel in the special children's programme which includes bush walks, picnics and tracking lessons.

For more information or to book visit www.tswalu.com.