

# The call of the wild



Photos: Wait A Little Safaris

**Above: Watching elephants enjoy a midday snooze. Top: Riding out into the bush from Wait A Little Safaris. The horses are beautifully trained and safe – the riding can be fast and exhilarating! NB *Horse&Rider* recommends you wear a good riding hat whenever you ride.**

**T**hrough the soft morning light, a pair of liquid brown eyes held our gaze, long eyelashes batting gently. Towering above our heads, the young giraffe moved with graceful ease.

Then suddenly, a zigzag of black and white dazzled across the path – a herd of zebra snorting and in obvious haste. The giraffe spooked and cantered off in pursuit with its awkward, prehistoric rocking movement. We were left blinking hard, enveloped in a cloud of orange dust.

It was February, and as the Northern Hemisphere was buried in rain and snow, my friend Carol and I had set off like migratory birds to a warmer climate. Our destination was Wait A Little Horse Safaris, situated on a huge and diverse private game reserve that offers a taste of Africa before cars and people took over.

## The Big Five on horseback

Visits to the African bush can be extremely varied and while some of the game parks can feel heavily commercial with seemingly orchestrated game viewings, Wait A Little is far removed from this. Along with adjoining Makalali, the reserve has been set aside for the protection of Africa's heritage, the Big Five – lions, leopard, elephants, Cape buffalo and rhino.

In 1998, when Gerti and Philip Kusseler moved to South Africa and bought this piece of land, it harboured only plains game. Now it is one of the few places in Africa where you can see the Big Five on horseback. With small groups of seven riding guests, you have a privileged glimpse of game in its natural habitat, without the intrusion of crowds or 4x4s. It's a