



**PRESS KIT**



Safari Wilderness Ranch opened its doors to the public on March 1st, 2012. Since then, we've expanded our animal collection, added exciting new tour options, and even opened up our facilities for venue rentals, parties, receptions and more!

Visitors tell us they come away from the Safari Wilderness experience in awe because they are able to see wildlife herds in huge, immersive natural landscapes and witness the inner workings of a genuine farm operation. Safari Wilderness Ranch is not a theatrical production for visitors—it's the real thing!

# ABOUT SAFARI WILDERNESS

**H**ave you ever encountered a herd of Red Lechwe running through sparkling water in the sun? How soft is an Eland's nose? Have you caught the sweet scent of a Zebra's breath?

These are memories that last a lifetime.

A rare and unique experience, Safari Wilderness Ranch is a world away from the hustle and bustle of civilization. Here you feel the silence, enveloped by an open vista of grazing animals surrounded by cypress domes and bay trees.

Safari Wilderness Ranch is not a zoo or theme park. There are no crowds and no lines. Here you will enjoy a natural adventure. Our knowledgeable and experienced guides will tour you through large herds of exotic game on over 260 acres of pristine wilderness in customized safari vehicles, fitted with shade canopies and stadium seating.

If you prefer a more adventurous mode of transport, you can view our wild game by camelback, horseback, or kayak. You can also embark on the epic llama trek.

Safari Wilderness Ranch is a family-owned, licensed working game ranch specializing in wetland exotic species and domestic heritage breeds such as African Watusi and Irish Dexter cattle, and Austrian Haflinger horses.

Visitors are strictly limited in number, reflecting the sensitivity of our area. Now you can join us on an exclusive, fun, and educational journey where you will learn about Florida's natural and human history, our conservation programs, and encounter amazing animals that are endangered or extinct in the wild.



# FACT SHEET

- Basic Facts:** Safari Wilderness Ranch has over 450 animals ranging from domestics to exotics from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and the Americas.
- Experiences:**
1. **Vehicle Safari** — go out in a customized safari vehicle for an epic game-viewing experience
  2. **Camel Expedition** — become part of the herd as you experience our exotic animals from atop one of our dromedary or bactrian camels
  3. **Horseback Safari** — experience herds of grazing animals while riding on one of our strong yet gentle Austrian Haflinger horses
  4. **Kayak Safari** — navigate through our freshwater areas, get up close and personal with our wetland species, and even hand-feed the lemurs on lemur island
  5. **Llama Trek** — trek with your own llama through various ecotypes in a setting that feels right out of Africa
    - All experiences are guided by knowledgeable safari guides
    - Pricing information is available at [safariwilderness.com](http://safariwilderness.com)
- Optional Experiences:**
1. **Ring-Tailed Lemur Feeding** — experience the sweet soft touch of our ring-tailed lemurs as they line up to politely take grapes from your fingers
  2. **Mini-Camel Safari** — take an abbreviated ride on one of our dromedary or Bactrian camels around our free-flight aviary, mammal house, and petting zoo barn
  3. **Budgie Feeding** — enter our outdoor aviary and feed our beautiful budgie parakeets
  4. **Guinea Pig Feeding** — get ready to be greeted with the adorable whistling sounds of our guinea pig colony as you feed these delightful South American rodents
- Tour times:** Tours run daily. **Reservations are required.**
- Accreditation:** Safari Wilderness Ranch is accredited by the Zoological Association of America (ZAA) and licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- Management:** Family-owned and operated since 2006, Safari Wilderness is a private agritourism venture that opened to the public by owners Lex Salisbury and Stephen Wehrmann in 2012.

# CUSTOMIZED VEHICLE SAFARI



Each of our customized safari trucks is equipped with stadium seating and a full-coverage canvas shade. Vehicles vary in size, seating between 20–40 people.

You'll be conducted through our expansive wilderness ranch in comfort and safety where you'll get spectacular close-up encounters with eland, red lechwe, sitatunga, waterbuck, Grant's zebra, greater kudu, Watusi cattle, barasingha, axis deer, fallow deer, water buffalo, scimitar-horned oryx, nilgai, blackbuck antelope and more unique and endangered species in large herds! Take part in real hands-on interactions with many species that feed from the vehicle.

You will be comfortable year-round under our special truck canopy with a cool breeze as the vehicle carries you on your safari adventure.

# CAMEL EXPEDITION



Game viewing on camels is simply sublime. Become a part of the herd, joining our exotic animals in their natural state. Camel safaris are about an hour and a half in length and are led by two experienced tour guides/camel handlers. We have dromedary, Bactrian, and tūlu camels. Camels were one of the first species domesticated by humans—over 6,000 years ago!

Our camels are treated with kindness and respect—and they love their jobs. They line up at the gate each morning eager to go to work! After giving their safaris, each camel returns to the herd in their large grassy pasture with trees and open sky for rest, play, and recharging. Our camels are athletes, and they live long and healthy lives.

In our three decades of working with camels, we have developed the only full-on camel backed game-viewing safari that we know of outside of Africa.

# LLAMA TREK



Llamas have been helping people carry their wares for thousands of years. Your llama will carry your things (water, binoculars, coat, snacks, etc) as you trek through various ecotypes in a setting that feels right out of Africa.

These members of the camel family are in the fossil record in Florida. They have been bred for gentleness and make excellent hiking companions. Llamas are alert, curious and as excited to trek as you are. They walk at a comfortable pace and their keen senses help point out animals you might miss. Walking with a llama will capture your heart and make your Safari Wild llama trek all the more memorable.

# HORSEBACK SAFARI



Safari Wild has made a longterm commitment to Haflinger horses. This European breed is kind, strong, gentle and dependable. Haflingers make excellent safari companions.

Ride in between herds of grazing animals and experience their behaviors first-hand in nature. Savoring the sights, smells and sounds of Safari Wild is awesome and unforgettable.

# KAYAK SAFARI



Game viewing by kayak offers a completely unique perspective that is both adventurous and educational!

On our Kayak Safari you'll navigate through our freshwater areas, getting spectacular close-up encounters with our wetland species such as Uganda Kob, common and Defassa waterbuck, red lechwe, and ostrich. In addition you will see a variety of our common local waterfowl and upland birds which may include the following: killdeer, egrets, herons, ibis, spoonbills, cormorants, wood duck, anhinga, bald eagle, kestrel, red-shouldered hawk, meadowlark, black and turkey vulture.

Mid-way through your safari, you will navigate to our lemur island, where you'll hand-feed grapes to two different species of lemurs. You will also have a chance to feed the native fish in our waterways. The experience lasts about an hour and a half.

# RING-TAILED LEMUR FEEDING



Learn about lemur social behaviors, what makes them primates like us, and why they are in danger of extinction.

You can enter the ring-tailed lemur habitat with a guide and hand feed grapes to a troop of playful prosimians. Ring-tailed lemurs are very polite. They will line up to gently touch your hand with theirs, carefully removing a grape from your fingers. They tilt their heads back, so as not to lose one drop of grape juice!

This activity is very exclusive and limited to a few participants per day.

# WEDDINGS & EVENTS



Seeking a truly unique setting for your wedding, corporate event, or special celebration? We've got you covered.

Our main events facility, the Safari Lodge, is a two-story, 13,000 square foot, multipurpose agricultural building. Enjoy the 360-degree panoramic view overlooking our exotic wildlife. A walk-through aviary and small mammals section are located just outside.

For a more intimate setting, ask about our elevated Oasis Deck, which provides a treetop panoramic view of our wildlife. Water, electricity, and restroom are available right in the middle of our wildlife preserve.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 13,000 square foot Safari Lodge complete with heating and A/C
- Wild animal encounters
- On-site catering
- Guided wildlife safaris by vehicle, camelback, or horse-drawn carriage
- Hand-feed ring-tailed lemurs
- Complimentary parking

# BIO: LEX SALISBURY

PRESIDENT/CEO



Lex Salisbury has over 35 years of experience with exotic animals, having worked in zoos in England, Australia, and the US since 1978. Frustrated with the practical constraints of limited space in zoos and encouraged by witnessing the successful conversion of cattle to game ranches in southern Africa, he decided to open Safari Wilderness Ranch in Lakeland, Florida, and its sister facility, Giraffe Ranch in Dade City, Florida.

Formerly, Lex served as President/CEO of Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo, bringing the zoo from one of "five worst zoos in America" in 1986 (Humane Society) to the "Best Zoo in America" (Child Magazine) in 2004. In his 21 years at Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo, he grew the budget 100-fold (from \$200k to \$20m).

Born and raised in Fairbanks, Alaska, Lex earned his Bachelor's degree from the University of Sydney and his Master's degree in Environmental Sciences from Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia.

# HI-RES LOGOS

Download high-resolution logos, photographs, and more at [safariwildernessv.com/press/](https://safariwildernessv.com/press/)



## BRAND & USAGE GUIDELINES

- ✓ DO use the logo to promote Safari Wilderness
- ✗ DO NOT change the color or dimensions
- ✗ DO NOT modify the logos in any way
- ✗ DO NOT use the antelope or grass design elements by themselves outside of the logo
- ✗ Avoid naming your product or publication in any way that implies the endorsement of Safari Wilderness.