

BLACK RHINOS IN ZIMBABWE

RE-INTRODUCED AFTER AN ABSENCE OF 50 YEARS

Rani Resorts has been involved in the re-introduction of endangered black rhino and, in 2006 helped to release rhinos into the Victoria Falls area after an absence of nearly 50 years. Over the past 10 years, Rani Resorts has worked hard to reintroduce wildlife into the area with a focus on conservation and preservation of the natural environment.

In 2007, black rhino were re-introduced into the reserve; this amazing creature is one of the few

on the planet that has evolved very little from prehistoric times. The black rhino (*Diceros bicornis*) has for years, been the centre of attention when it comes to the rehabilitation of near extinct species. In 1993 the International Rhino Foundation reported that there were only 3610 black rhinos remaining in Zimbabwe with numbers in 1992-4 dwindling to below 2300.

Zimbabwe used to have the world's largest population of black rhino but political and economical instabilities saw this population decline rapidly. The main threat to the rhino is poaching for its horn - though rhino horn is made of nothing more than matted hair. With declining numbers Rhino trusts have emerged in Zimbabwe - there are reportedly less than 500 black rhinos in Zimbabwe but numbers seem to be increasing through protecting and rehabilitating the black rhino popula-



THE STANLEY AND LIVINGSTONE, A SMALL LUXURY HOTEL AIMED AT DISCERNING INDIVIDUALS, IS SITUATED ON THE PRIVATE 6 000-ACRE VICTORIA FALLS PRIVATE GAME RESERVE, 10 MINUTES FROM VICTORIA FALLS. The reserve is the only one in the area to offer the Big 5 and a black rhino education centre and breeding programme. Guests are treated to an up-close-and-personal experience with Africa's Big 5, via a game drive with an opportunity to spot black rhino and participate in an anti-poaching activity with the International Anti-Poaching Foundation (IAPF) based on-site.

Rani Resorts plays a proactive role in conserving the natural environment around Victoria Falls – one of the seven natural wonders of the world. They own The Stanley and Livingstone at Victoria Falls and Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve, which abuts other private reserves and the Zambezi National Park, providing a contiguous wildlife area that stretches for hundreds of kilometers into Botswana, Zambia and Namibia's Caprivi strip. This vast conservation area is one of the most important regions for free-ranging elephant in Africa.

Within the Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve Rani Resorts run a Wisdom 4 Wildlife programme in conjunction with Shearwater Adventures. This programme involves local school-pupils interacting with wildlife, learning to identify flora and fauna and taking away important conservation messages.