



WildlifeCampus

Learn-Protect-Save



Game lodge management

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This is a free component

If you haven't bought this course, you can only access this **single free component**.

Feel free to complete as many free components as you'd like; they're designed to give you an idea of our online courses.

However, **no certificates** are issued for free components.

To access the full course, visit our **shop** or email us at **info@wildlifecampus.com** to request an invoice.

Disclaimer

This course is a comprehensive guide to the essential operations for effectively managing a lodge. It covers all aspects, including lodge operations, guest services, staff management, marketing strategies, financial management, and environmental sustainability.

Each lodge operates uniquely, influenced by its specific internal processes, management styles, and service offerings.

Each lodge's operations should be tailored to its unique internal procedures and policies while ensuring compliance with the relevant laws and regulations of the country in which it is located. By understanding these foundational elements, managers will be better equipped to create a welcoming and responsible experience for guests while promoting the well-being of the surrounding wildlife and ecosystem.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the course content, WildlifeCampus does not guarantee its suitability for all individuals or specific situations.

Students are advised to seek professional advice where necessary and ensure that any information or techniques learned are applied in accordance with local laws, regulations, and best practices.

WildlifeCampus is not responsible for any loss, damage, or liability arising from using or applying the course materials, either directly or indirectly.

By taking this course, students acknowledge and agree to these terms and understand that the course is designed to **provide general guidance** and insight into game lodge management but does not replace professional or legal counsel.

Welcome to WildlifeCampus

Upon completing the full course, WildlifeCampus will automatically be notified and will contact you by email for your certificate information (please check your junk/trash folders for emails you may have missed from us).

No need to contact us to let us know you are done.

Note: certificates will only be issued once all student fees or subscriptions have been **paid in full**.

Important notes:

Take the test on the top right-hand side of the component page. This is where you will take the test once you have read the full component. Keep taking the tests until you complete all the components in the course. You will then automatically graduate.

Download the PDF on the top right-hand side of the component page. This is where you will download our course content in PDF format.

An important note on our test questions

The assessment philosophy of WildlifeCampus does not require students to memorise thousands of facts. Instead, the tests are designed so that students come to an understanding of the material. You may find that certain questions are not based directly on what is presented in the content. But why is this so?

Many of these questions have been deliberately set to be as ambiguous, obscure, subjective, challenging and confusing as possible. At some points, perhaps even frustrating. The challenge on our side is to provide a quality assessment of the content without making it a simple comprehension of the text.

To this end, we attempt to make each question one that you must stop and think about. It is a device to ensure students understand and apply the content, but most importantly, to **come to their own conclusions**.

Facts and a pinch of salt

Life sciences are not 'exact sciences.' In fact, mathematics is the only discipline that can legitimately claim the title of a 'pure science.' What we know and share with you in these courses reflects our current understanding—an understanding that is subject to change. The validity or 'truth' of these facts is, and always will be, open to confirmation, revision, or refutation.

Throughout these courses, you will encounter thousands of facts, whether about the ecology of rhinos or rhino beetles, but it is important to recognise that these facts represent our present knowledge. Inevitably, some of what we present here will, in time, be proven incomplete, partially correct, or even incorrect. Biology, by its nature, is a dynamic and ever-evolving field. While we strive to stay up-to-date, new discoveries, updated classifications, and paradigm shifts continually reshape our understanding. Accepted ideas are revisited and sometimes overturned, while others are reinforced and solidified.

The 'facts' presented in these courses are the product of countless contributions from a diverse range of experts, including botanists, zoologists, ornithologists, behaviourists, biologists, taxonomists, herpetologists, geologists, geographers, meteorologists, naturalists, photographers, entomologists, environmentalists, ecologists, ethologists, and passionate enthusiasts. These collective insights have been synthesised with our own research, observations, and interpretations to create what you see here.

As such, approach this material with a healthy dose of curiosity and scepticism. Science thrives on questioning, refining, and building upon what we think we know. Let this serve not as the final word but as a foundation for further exploration.

Glossary

All fields of science and travel have a vast amount of terminology and jargon, with biological science having more than most. Therefore, during our courses, you may encounter many new words. This very comprehensive list will assist you. You have full access to our glossary, which can be found **under the academic tab on our homepage**.

If you would like for us to email you the glossary in PDF format, send us an email request: **info@wildlifecampus.com**



The call of Africa **A poem by C Emily-Dibb**

When you've acquired a taste for dust,
The scent of our first rain,
You're hooked for life on Africa
And you'll not be right again

Till you can watch the setting moon
And hear the jackals bark
And know that they're around you
Waiting in the dark.

When you long to see the elephants,
Or to hear the coucal's song,
When the moonrise sets your blood on fire,
You've been away too long.

It's time to cut the traces loose
And let your heart go free
Beyond that far horizon,
Where your spirit yearns to be.

Africa is waiting... come!
Since you've touched the open sky
And learned to love the rustling grass,
The wild fish eagle's cry,
You'll always hunger for the bush,
For the lion's rasping roar,
To camp at last beneath the stars
And to be at peace once more.

A photograph of an outdoor dining area. In the foreground, a wooden table is set with various dishes: a woven basket containing a plant with large, patterned leaves, a wooden board with small tarts and fruit, a bowl of fruit, and several small bowls of food. In the background, people are seated at tables, and the scene is softly lit, suggesting an evening or dusk setting.

Module 1 Component 1

Introduction to Game Lodge Management

Introduction

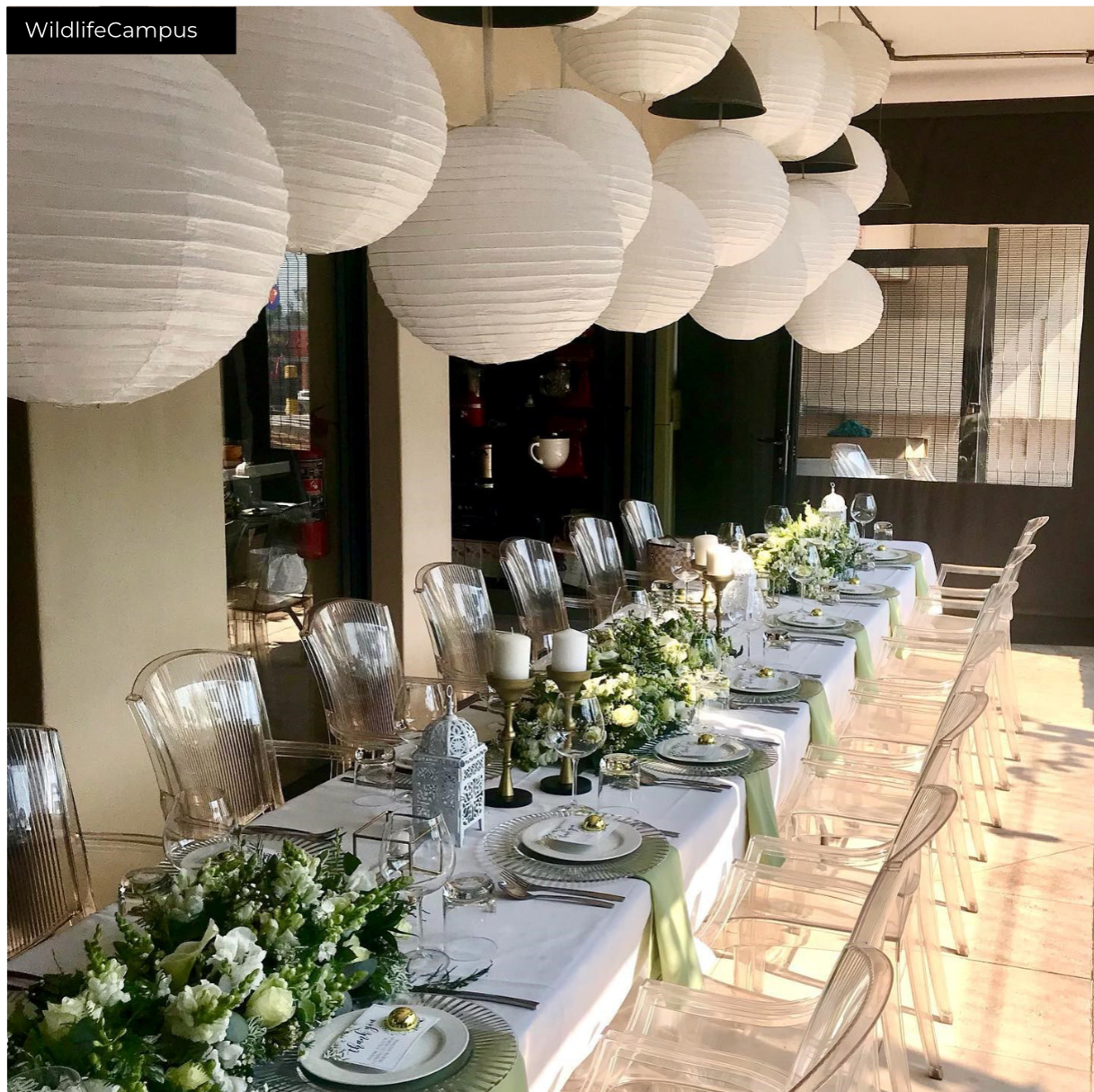
Welcome to the WildlifeCampus Game Lodge Management Course!

Congratulations on making an excellent choice! You are about to take an exciting and insightful journey into the world of game lodge management. Whether you aspire to run a lodge, enhance your hospitality skills, or deepen your understanding of the industry, this course will equip you with the knowledge and practical insights needed to succeed.



At WildlifeCampus, we are passionate about conservation, hospitality, and creating unforgettable guest experiences. Through this course, you will gain valuable skills in operations, guest relations, sustainability, and more, helping you to stand out in this dynamic field.

The principles taught in our game lodge management course are highly relevant across all hospitality industry sectors.



While lodges focus on delivering unique experiences in natural, often remote settings, **core principles such as management, guest service, sustainability, and operational efficiency can be effectively applied to cruise ships, hotels, guest houses, Airbnb's, resorts, restaurants, and similar hospitality establishments.**

Game lodge management involves overseeing the operations of a lodge located in or near a wildlife reserve, national park, or game reserve, where guests can engage closely with nature and wildlife. Professional and exceptional management ensures guests have an enjoyable experience while preserving the sustainability and ecological integrity of the surrounding environment.

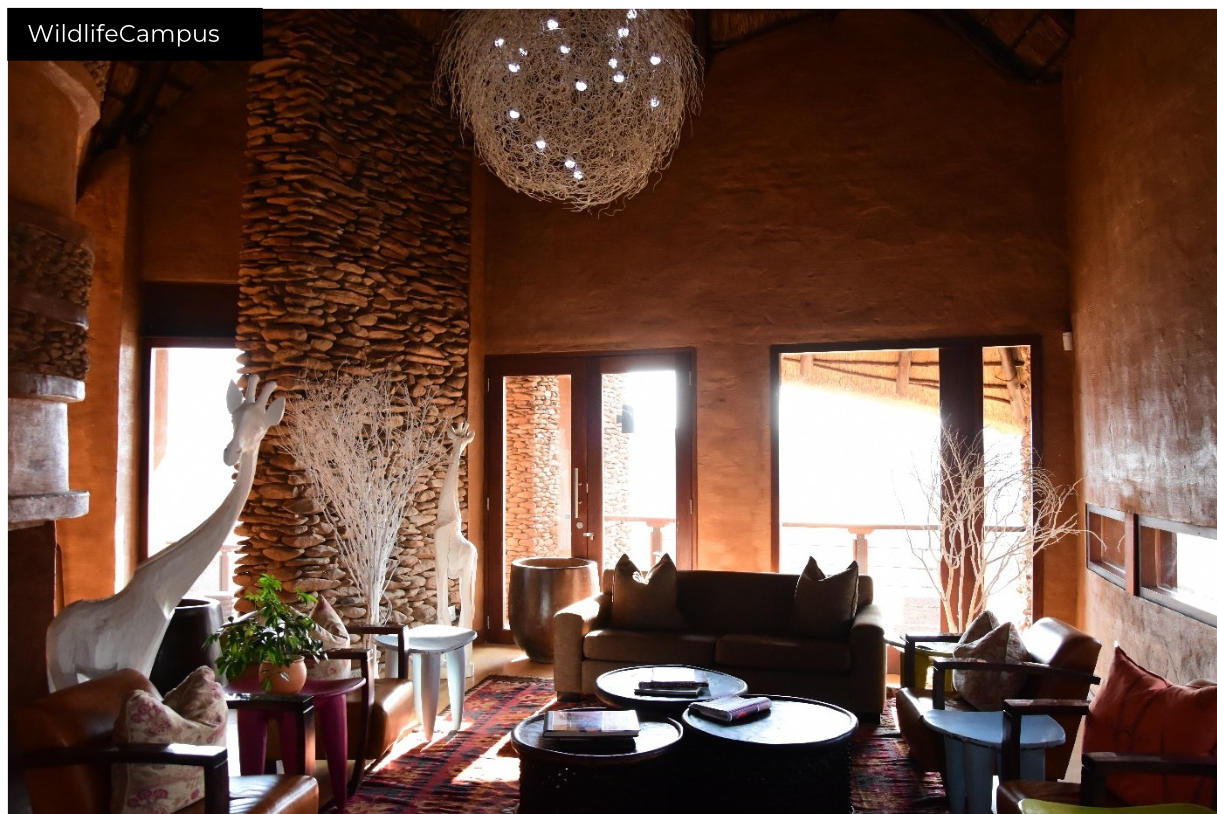
This requires managing various tasks, including administration, overseeing accommodations, coordinating game drives and bushwalks, supervising staff, managing resources such as food and supplies, and ensuring safety protocols are followed.



It is important to understand local wildlife, conservation practices, and the cultural and environmental aspects of the region. This knowledge helps create an enriching experience for guests while promoting eco-tourism and responsible wildlife management. **The goal is to blend hospitality with conservation efforts,** making lodges a source of tourism income and significant contributors to wildlife preservation.

Types of lodges

Lodges can be categorised based on location, accommodation offerings, level of luxury, and style. Each lodge type offers unique experiences, catering to various preferences and budgets while hosting guests in Africa's stunning wild landscapes.



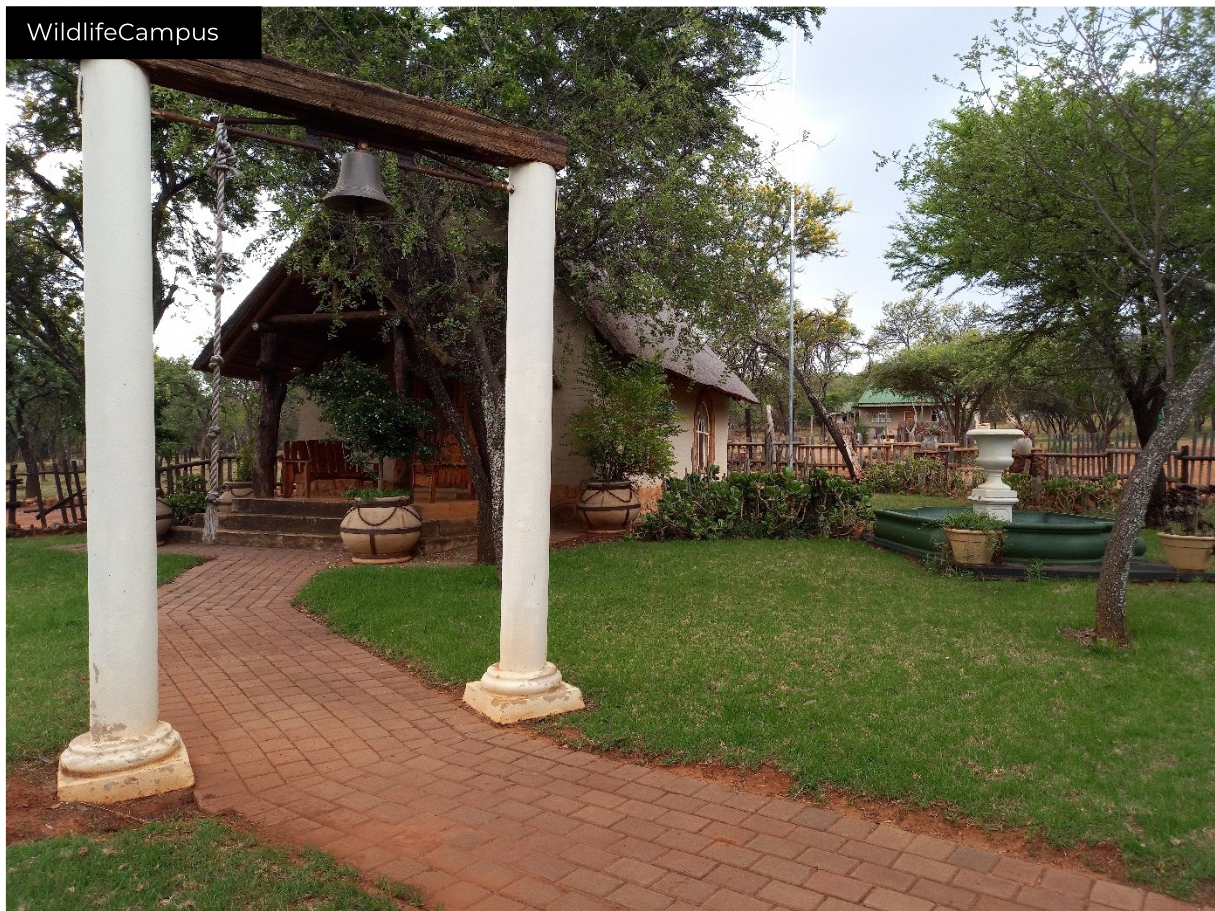
- 🌿 **Luxury lodges:** Opulent accommodations, gourmet dining, high-end beverages (**see the food and beverage procedure component**), private pools, spas, and personalised services.
- 🌿 **Mid-range lodges:** Comfortable but less extravagant accommodations with essential amenities and quality service.
- 🌿 **Budget lodges:** Basic yet functional accommodations with a focus on affordability. Often feature tents or simple chalets.
- 🌿 **Eco-lodges:** Built with sustainable materials, powered by renewable energy, and designed to minimise environmental impact.

- 🌿 **Bush camps:** Small, rustic lodges or tented camps, sometimes without electricity or running water, offering an authentic wilderness experience.
- 🌿 **Tented camps:** Luxury or semi-luxury tents with modern comforts like beds, en-suite bathrooms, and electricity.
- 🌿 **River lodges:** Located near rivers, these lodges offer activities like river safaris, fishing, and wildlife spotting by water.
- 🌿 **Treehouse lodges:** Elevated accommodations in or near trees providing a unique perspective of the surrounding environment.
- 🌿 **Private lodges:** Exclusive-use properties offering privacy, dedicated staff, and tailored experiences.
- 🌿 **Mobile safari camps:** Temporary camps that move seasonally or during wildlife migrations.



Grading of lodges

Lodges are typically graded based on various factors that assess their quality, service, and amenities. **Grading systems are designed to ensure consistency and help guests choose lodges that align with their preferences and expectations** while driving quality improvements in the industry.



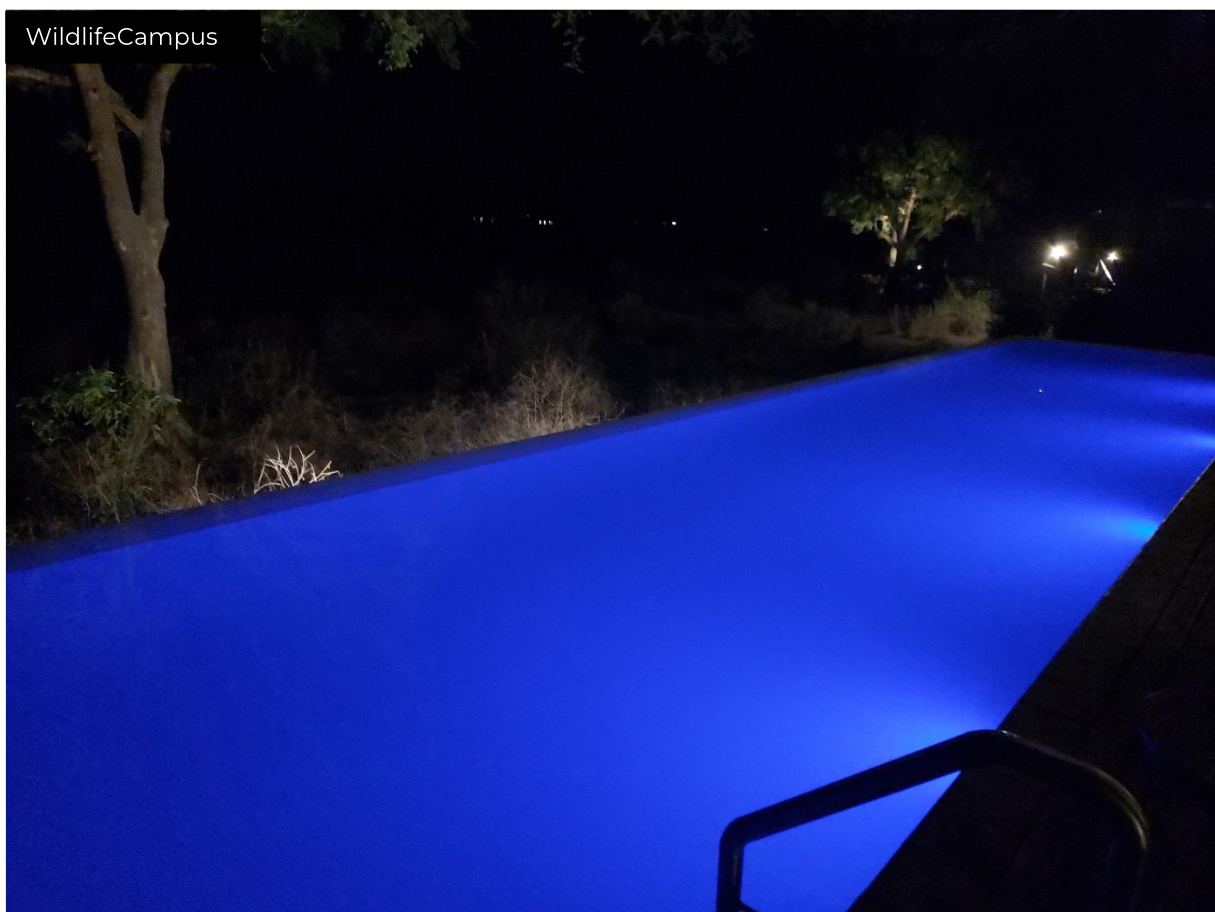
Star rating system

The most common grading system is the star rating system, which typically ranges from 1 to 5 stars (sometimes extending to 6 stars for ultra-luxury lodges). The number of stars awarded is based on various criteria, including the quality of accommodation, services, amenities, and facilities.

1-star lodges are basic with minimal facilities, while **5-star lodges** provide luxurious accommodations, high-end amenities, and exceptional service.

Grading criteria

- 🏠 **Accommodation quality:** The **comfort, cleanliness, and luxury** of the tents/rooms, including bedding, furniture, en-suite bathrooms, and **unique features** such as private decks or outdoor showers.
- 👤 **Service quality:** The **level of professionalism**, friendliness, and efficiency of staff, as well as guest services like concierge, room service, and specialised offerings (e.g., field guides).
- 📍 **Location and environmental impact:** The **lodge's proximity to the wildlife reserve or national park** and integration with the natural environment. Many grading systems also assess the lodge's sustainability practices, such as water conservation, energy use, and waste management.
- 🛋️ **Facilities and amenities:** The **variety and quality of facilities**, such as restaurants, bars, spas, pools, fitness centres, and other leisure activities like game drives, bush walks, and cultural experiences.



- 🍷 **Safety and security:** This includes secure access, staff training in emergency procedures, and the safety of guests during game drives or other activities.
- 🍷 **Food and dining: The variety, quality, and uniqueness of the dining experience,** including meals that cater to various dietary needs and whether local cuisine or gourmet dining is offered.
- 🍷 **Guest experience: Overall guest satisfaction,** which includes factors such as guest reviews, ambience, privacy, and the feeling of immersion in nature.






Grading agencies

For example, the **Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TCCSA)** is the official body that grades lodges and other accommodations in South Africa. Other countries may have their own national or regional grading organisations. These agencies often conduct anonymous inspections to ensure lodges meet the standards set for each rating.



Specialised categories

In addition to standard star ratings, some lodges may be graded based on specialised categories such as:

-  **Luxury lodge:** Focused on high-end, exclusive experiences with personalised services.
-  **Eco-lodge:** Emphasising sustainability, environmental conservation, and eco-friendly practices.
-  **Family-friendly lodge:** Offering amenities and activities suitable for families, such as child care and family-oriented game drives.

Guest reviews and reputation

Online guest reviews and reputations play a role in grading. While official ratings remain important, guests' feedback on platforms like TripAdvisor or Booking.com can impact how a lodge is perceived, especially regarding service and guest experience.

Periodic re-evaluation

Lodge ratings are often not permanent and may require periodic re-evaluation. This ensures that lodges continue to meet the standards and keep up with industry trends and guest expectations.

Your objective

Whichever type of lodge you manage, your goal is to **ensure that the quality of your service exceeds that of your competitors**. In the **long term**, you aim to establish your lodge as one of the **finest in the region**, gaining national and international recognition.

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Your **short-term objectives** are to achieve the following:

- 🌿 **Competitive advantage**
- 🌿 **Quality and innovation**
- 🌿 **Productivity**
- 🌿 **Profitability**

Philosophy of game lodge management

The philosophy of successful lodge management can be based on **five principles**:

- 🦏 **To provide the best experience possible, profitably.**
- 🦏 **Tourism helps preserve the rapidly disappearing wilderness areas in Southern Africa** by generating revenue and creating jobs, thus benefiting the country.
- 🦏 **All staff should obtain long-term personal fulfilment** and future growth prospects within the lodge.
- 🦏 **The directors and staff should derive short and long-term financial benefits.**
- 🦏 **The lodge must always maintain sound conservation practices and principles.**

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General statement of intent

Lodges should strive to be **low-impact**. They should not contribute to the degradation of the area.

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To achieve this, there are a few basic rules:

- 🌳 **All staff must obey all park rules.**
- 🌳 **Never** harass wildlife, take/remove or damage anything from the park. **Respect your surroundings**
- 🌳 **Never disturb breeding areas.**
- 🌳 **Never bury refuse.** The refuse must be removed and handed over to the park disposal area. All glass, plastic, tin cans, and paper must be recycled. **Implement responsible waste management policies** to remove electronic waste (e-waste), broken appliances and hazardous materials like batteries.
- 🌳 When leaving a campsite, the **area must be clean and fire ashes buried.**
- 🌳 **Burning wood should be minimal.**

Consistent minimum standards

Your minimum standards should be based on guest requirements, service levels, accommodation and personal attention. You are responsible for maintaining these standards and providing regular feedback to appropriate management.

It is necessary to monitor and adapt standards as guest requirements change.



When managing multiple camps and/or accommodation types, it is important to establish **consistent minimum standards** to ensure that **all guests receive a high level of service**, no matter which camp they visit.

Standardisation across all camps is necessary for maintaining brand integrity and **ensuring guest satisfaction**, directly impacting your reputation and encouraging repeat business.

- 🍷 **Every guest** should receive **the same level of personalised attention**, whether with a warm welcome, remembering their preferences, or providing customised experiences.
- 🍷 Implement standardised systems **to gather guest feedback**, such as surveys or comment cards. This will help ensure all camps meet or exceed guest expectations and that any issues can be addressed promptly.
- 🍷 Ensure **all communication aligns** with the lodge's tone, clarity, and customer service standards. **Develop clear guidelines to ensure all marketing materials**, signage, websites, and communication reflect the lodge's values and aesthetics. **Each camp should reinforce the same** brand identity, tone, and messaging.
- 🍷 **Establish clear guidelines** on how **each service should be provided**, such as check-in/check-out processes, meal service, and daily housekeeping. These processes should be standardised across all camps to ensure consistency and quality (**refer to the lodge procedure guidelines module**).
- 🍷 **Provide comprehensive training** on hospitality skills, lodge values, and standardised service delivery. This ensures that **staff members provide the same level of service** regardless of the camp.



- 🐾 Whether it is game drives, dining experiences, or wellness services, **each camp should follow the same protocol**. This includes timing, delivery, and quality of the service provided.
- 🐾 **Tents/rooms across all camps should follow a uniform setup**, cleanliness, and maintenance standard. This includes bedding, furniture, and amenities **that meet the lodge's quality expectations**.
- 🐾 Standardise Wi-Fi, lighting, toiletries, and air conditioning/heating features. Ensure that all tents/rooms are equipped with the **same level of comfort and convenience**.
- 🐾 Develop standardised cleaning and maintenance procedures. **Maintain a consistently high standard of cleanliness**.
- 🐾 **Ensure all equipment meets the same safety and maintenance standards** for activities like river safaris, horseback safaris, game drives and bushwalks. Guests should feel confident in the quality of the gear and know that it is maintained to the highest standards.



- Standardised menus, wine lists, and promotional materials across the camps. **Uniformity in materials** also extends to providing the same amenities in tents/rooms (e.g., towels, bathrobes, toiletries) and using similar packaging and supplies.
- While each camp may offer unique regional dishes or a few signature items, **ensuring consistency in the overall menu** design, food quality, and presentation is essential. This also includes **special dietary requirements** and meal timings, which **should align with guest expectations**.
- Maintain consistent food sourcing, preparation, and presentation standards.** This can be ensured through regular staff training, quality control checks, and maintaining relationships with trusted suppliers.
- Ensure **all details**, such as guest preferences for meal times, tent/room temperature, or special requests, are **consistently captured and addressed across all locations**.
- Implement a lodge-wide approach to guest safety**, including first-aid readiness, emergency evacuation procedures, and health protocols for activities like game drives.



- ✿ Establish and communicate **standardised hygiene and sanitation procedures** to minimise the spread of infectious diseases. These protocols should be followed consistently, including the **regular sanitisation** of common areas and private guest spaces.
- ✿ Ensure all camps use **the same reservation system** and booking platform. This ensures consistency in guest communication, reservation tracking, and efficient operations.
- ✿ Standardise **guest data collection systems**, ensuring each camp can access important guest information (with their consent) to provide a flawless experience, such as knowing their previous stays or specific requests.
- ✿ **Conduct regular audits of each camp** to ensure standards are consistently met.



Establishing consistent, high-performance standards across all aspects of service, accommodation, and guest experience is essential for building a strong brand and ensuring guest satisfaction.

Characteristics of a lodge manager

A lodge manager is often involved with guests. A manager must be able to entertain their guests and run a professional operation. Some characteristics to look for when employing someone for this position, for individuals already in this position or those striving for such a position:

-  **Ability to confidently deal with and communicate** with guests and staff from different backgrounds and cultures.
-  **Must love living and working in the bush** and be driven by the love of the outdoors, not money. Must be able to handle the isolation of being cut off from the comforts of modern town living.
-  Whether through formal or informal education, you **should understand all topics**, including fauna and flora. Taking **extra courses (like this one)** and earning **extra certificates** helps broaden your knowledge and puts you in a good position towards employment, showing you are **driven and determined**.
-  Must be able to **accept** and **delegate** responsibilities. **Motivate** your staff and be trusted and respected by them.
-  **Organise** your office, staff, time, workshop, catering, accommodation, maintenance and all other aspects of managing the lodge professionally and profitably.
-  **Must be presentable.** Neat, clean and pleasing to the eye.
-  **Must handle emergencies and crises calmly and efficiently and constantly plan.**
-  **Be positive, have the right attitude**, and remain **motivated**, caring, and level-headed. This requires a strong work ethic, loyalty, and honesty.
-  **Cannot afford to be moody** or take personal problems to work.
-  **Be prepared** to work **long hours**.
-  **Must enjoy working with and pleasing people** and be outgoing.
-  **Must know what guests want** and what pleases and disappoints them.

The lodge Credo

Your lodge should strive to provide the finest possible safaris in the Earth's wild places. It should be holistic, conservation-orientated, non-consumptive, caring and ethically driven.

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- 🔊 **Low volume, low impact, non-consumptive tourism** is the finest way to create sustainable economic growth for the country, its people, your staff and partners. Your activities must help stimulate these economies to help protect the environment and its wildlife.
- 🔊 **Everything you do must add value** to the countries in which you operate, the environment, the communities who live around the wild places where you operate, the people who work for you, your guests, your partners, and your lodge.

- 🌿 **Put the environments in which you work above everything else.** Your ethics should rely on you to say 'no' to guests' requests if that request compromises your principles (i.e., it is harmful to the environment, their safety or the safety of your staff).
- 🌿 **Recognise that one of your primary resources is your staff.** They are, in every respect, the interface between your products, the environment and your guests.
- 🌿 **It is your responsibility to employ, train and help uplift the communities.** Ensure the prosperity of these rich cultures, the wildlife surrounding them, and the wild places they occupy. Aim to provide the framework to enable these communities to fully embrace their environmental and cultural heritages and become the custodians of the future.
- 🌿 **On your game drives and in your camps, you host, entertain and educate your guests,** striving to give them holistic experiences that will produce new (or re-affirmed) conservationists and create guests for life. At the end of the experience at your lodge, your **guests should become ambassadors for your lodge and Africa.** To take Africa's messages of hope and conservation around the globe.

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- 🌿 **Hosting guests is your business;** 'hosting' them means making them feel at home. Create an atmosphere and an ambience in your camps that makes your guests feel like they are in their hosts' home. **Your staff must enjoy interacting with guests.** They must understand that your future depends on how well they look after them and how much they enjoy their stay with you.
- 🌿 **Your staff and guests' safety and enjoyment of their travels are paramount.**
- 🌿 If you are not nurturing the environment or looking after your guests (or the people who support you), **then you may not be best suited for this business.**
- 🌿 **Looking after people is what you do.** If you do not like dealing with guests (or your customers - i.e. agents), then you do not have a long-term future in this industry.
- 🌿 Always live by the '**under-promising and over-delivering**' principle and act with integrity.

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COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic had **significant and far-reaching effects** on lodges, particularly in Africa, where **tourism is a major economic driver**. What follows is an overview of these key impacts.



- As international travel restrictions were imposed and borders closed, the industry saw a **dramatic drop in visitor numbers**. Tourism, especially from high-traffic markets like the United States, Europe, and Asia, came **near a halt**.
- With the **drastic decline in guests**, many lodges faced **severe revenue losses**. Some companies had to close temporarily or even shut down operations due to financial strain. Many relied on government support or loans to stay afloat.
- With fewer bookings and the suspension of many operations, lodges had to **lay off or reduce staff working hours**. This impacted guides, drivers, chefs, support staff, and management teams.
- The **future of employment in the industry became uncertain**, with many staff unsure when they would be called back to work, especially as restrictions lingered.

- 🌿 **Lodges implemented health and safety protocols.** These protocols included enhanced sanitisation measures, temperature checks, social distancing, and mask mandates. Some companies also invested in upgrading their facilities to meet these standards.
- 🌿 **Staff were trained on COVID-19 protocols** to ensure they could provide a safe environment for guests. Some companies also introduced **digital check-in processes** and **virtual tours** to **minimise physical contact**.
- 🌿 With international tourism restricted, many lodges **pivoted to attract local and regional guests**. This shift to domestic tourism helped some companies recover. However, the volume of local tourists could not fully compensate for the loss of international visitors.
- 🌿 **Many lodges offered promotions, deals, or special packages** to make getaways more accessible to domestic tourists. This was an attempt to fill empty slots and generate some revenue.
- 🌿 **Lodges faced widespread cancellations**, as guests could not travel due to lockdowns or feared health risks. This put a strain on businesses, particularly those with strict cancellation policies.
- 🌿 In response to cancellations, lodges had to **offer refunds or vouchers** for future travel. This led to a temporary cash-flow crunch as companies waited for bookings to resume.
- 🌿 **National parks and reserves were closed or had limited access** during the height of the pandemic. Many lodges rely heavily on park entrance fees, which were drastically reduced during these closures.
- 🌿 The pandemic **also disrupted supply chains**, affecting everything from food and beverage supplies to fuel for vehicles. In some cases, the lack of international flights made it challenging to restock essential items.
- 🌿 Many companies started **offering virtual safaris** and live-streamed wildlife experiences to stay connected with customers and maintain brand presence. This helped create an emotional connection with potential guests who could not visit in person.
- 🌿 **Operators embraced contactless technology for bookings, check-ins, and payments**, making it easier to adhere to social distancing guidelines.

-  **The loss of income directly impacted conservation efforts.** Many wildlife reserves and national parks were funded by tourism. Without revenue, it was challenging to maintain conservation activities, anti-poaching operations, and community support programs.
-  Some parks and reserves have faced **financial difficulties**, impacting their ability to care for wildlife. **Reducing staff in conservation roles** and wildlife monitoring **jeopardised long-term sustainability**.
-  As the industry began to recover, companies had to contend with **increased competition** for limited customers. Lodges worked harder on their marketing strategies and offered new, innovative packages to stand out.
-  In response to health concerns, many guests preferred private or small group visits that **minimised contact with others**. This led to an increase in demand for exclusive and tailored experiences, often at higher price points.
-  The pandemic also **sparked a greater interest in sustainable tourism**, with many guests becoming more conscious of their trips' environmental and social impacts. Lodges aligned with eco-friendly and responsible tourism have gained favour in this growing market.
-  In many African countries, **governments introduced relief programs** to support tourism businesses by providing grants, loans, or tax relief. However, the level of support varied between countries.
-  **Lodges worked together within the industry**, joining forces with tourism boards, wildlife conservation organisations, and travel agencies to promote safe travel and restore confidence in the tourism sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted lodges, particularly in Africa, as travel restrictions, financial losses, and health concerns dramatically altered the landscape.

However, the industry demonstrated resilience through adaptation, innovation, and a focus on local and private tourism. While recovery is ongoing, lodges continue to explore new ways to meet evolving guest expectations and protect wildlife conservation efforts.

Glossary

À la carte: A menu style where each dish is priced individually, allowing customers to choose specific items rather than a set menu.

Accommodation: A place where guests can stay. This term refers to the physical lodging provided to visitors.

Allergy awareness: Ensuring that staff know about common food allergies and communicate them effectively to the kitchen staff to avoid serving harmful dishes to guests.

All-inclusive: A type of hospitality offering where all meals, beverages, and sometimes activities are included in the cost of a stay or service.

Amenities: Additional features or services that enhance the guest experience, such as Wi-Fi, toiletries, pools, fitness centres, and parking.

Annual leave: Paid time off that staff are entitled to take for rest or vacation. In South Africa, staff are typically entitled to 21 consecutive days of annual leave per year, or 1.25 days per month worked.

Bartender: Prepares and serves guests' beverages, maintains a clean and organised bar area, and provides excellent customer service. They ensure a welcoming atmosphere, assist guests with beverage recommendations, and create a memorable experience through attentive and efficient service.

Bellhop/porter: Someone who assists guests with their luggage, directs them to their tents/rooms and may offer additional services, such as delivering messages or packages.

Big five: A term used to describe five of the most iconic African animals to observe: the lion, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant, and buffalo.

Boma: An outdoor enclosure that hosts guests for traditional meals, often including a bonfire, where guests can experience authentic African dining under the stars.

Booking engine: A tool or platform (often online) that allows guests to make reservations for accommodations, restaurants, or activities directly through a hospitality provider's website or third-party service.

Boutique hotel: A small, stylish, and often independently owned hotel characterised by its unique design, personalised service, and focus on luxury or niche experiences.

Buffet: A buffet is a meal service style where various dishes are presented on a table or counter. Guests can serve themselves, choosing from a range of foods and portion sizes according to their preferences. The food is usually arranged in chafing dishes or trays and can be replenished. Buffets are popular as they offer a wide selection and convenience, allowing diners to enjoy diverse foods in a social atmosphere.

Bush walk: A guided walk where guests explore the wilderness on foot with a trained guide, learning about the environment, plants, and smaller wildlife.

Bushveld: A term referring to the natural environment in southern Africa, typically characterised by grasslands, scattered trees, and various wildlife.

Bussing: Cleaning dirty plates, glasses, and silverware from the table after guests have finished eating to prepare it for the next seating.

Campfire: A social activity where guests gather around a fire in the evening, sharing stories and enjoying the outdoor atmosphere.

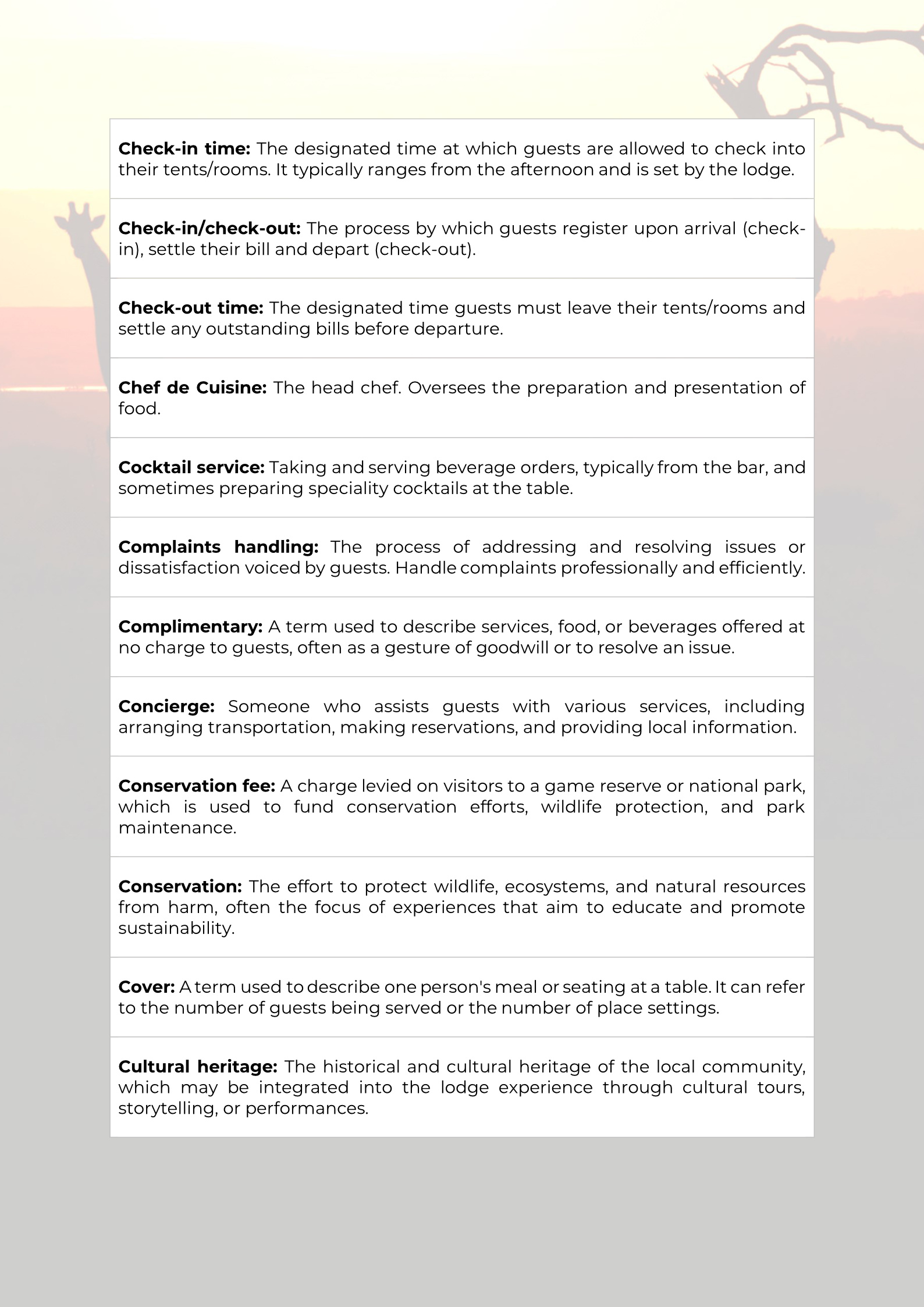
Carrying over leave: In South Africa, staff can carry over their unused leave from one year to the next, but employers are not required to allow it beyond one year. Any unused leave after 12 months can be forfeited unless otherwise agreed upon.

Cashiering: The process of handling payments from guests for accommodation, meals, and other services during their stay. It includes processing credit card payments and issuing receipts.

Catering: Providing food and beverages for events, conferences, or special occasions, either on-site or as part of off-site services.

Check/tab: The bill presented to customers after their meal, detailing the cost of food, beverages, and services, as well as any applicable taxes or tips.

Check-in form: A document guests complete upon arrival, which may include personal information, payment details, and specific requests for their stay.



Check-in time: The designated time at which guests are allowed to check into their tents/rooms. It typically ranges from the afternoon and is set by the lodge.

Check-in/check-out: The process by which guests register upon arrival (check-in), settle their bill and depart (check-out).

Check-out time: The designated time guests must leave their tents/rooms and settle any outstanding bills before departure.

Chef de Cuisine: The head chef. Oversees the preparation and presentation of food.

Cocktail service: Taking and serving beverage orders, typically from the bar, and sometimes preparing speciality cocktails at the table.

Complaints handling: The process of addressing and resolving issues or dissatisfaction voiced by guests. Handle complaints professionally and efficiently.

Complimentary: A term used to describe services, food, or beverages offered at no charge to guests, often as a gesture of goodwill or to resolve an issue.

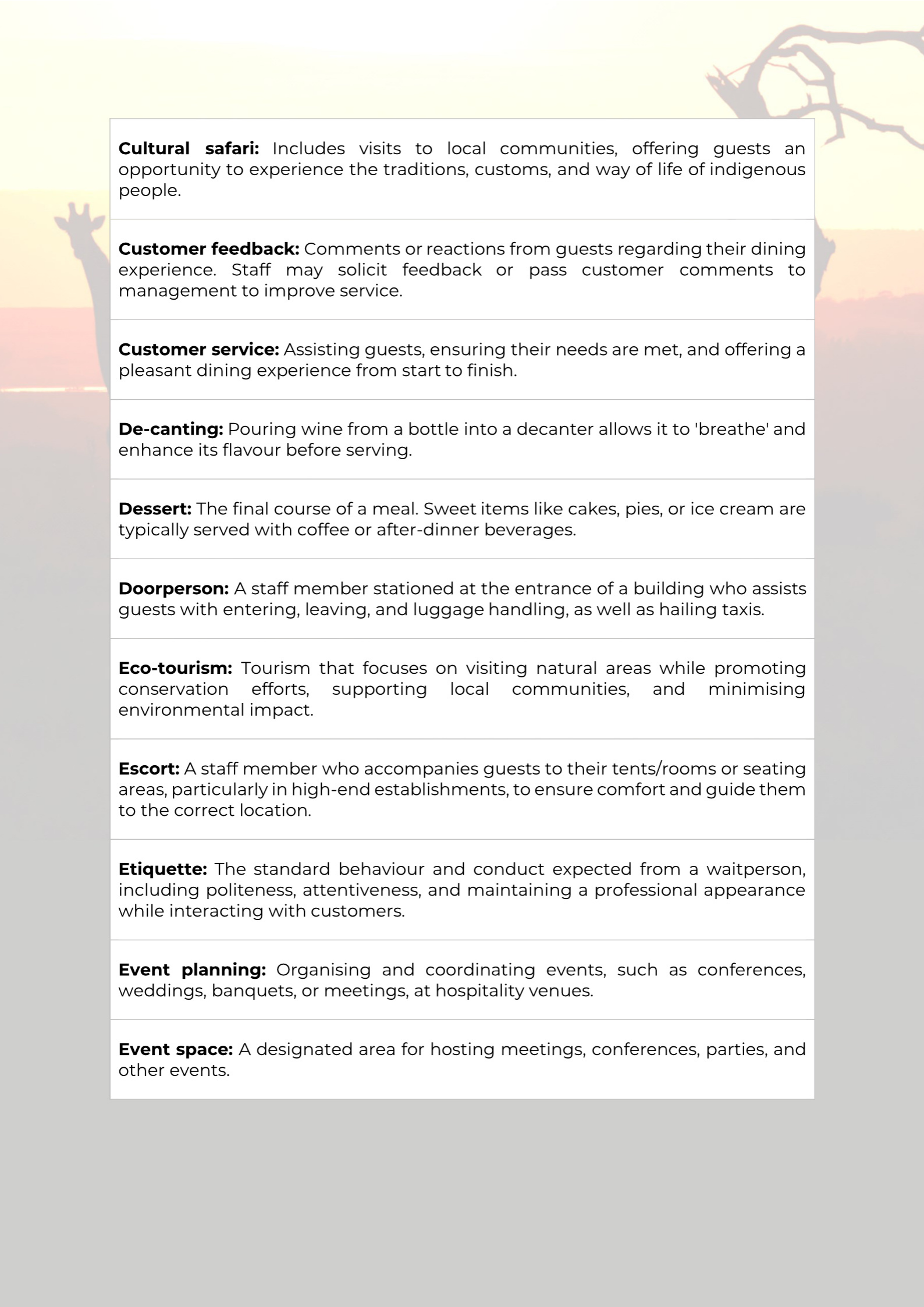
Concierge: Someone who assists guests with various services, including arranging transportation, making reservations, and providing local information.

Conservation fee: A charge levied on visitors to a game reserve or national park, which is used to fund conservation efforts, wildlife protection, and park maintenance.

Conservation: The effort to protect wildlife, ecosystems, and natural resources from harm, often the focus of experiences that aim to educate and promote sustainability.

Cover: A term used to describe one person's meal or seating at a table. It can refer to the number of guests being served or the number of place settings.

Cultural heritage: The historical and cultural heritage of the local community, which may be integrated into the lodge experience through cultural tours, storytelling, or performances.



Cultural safari: Includes visits to local communities, offering guests an opportunity to experience the traditions, customs, and way of life of indigenous people.

Customer feedback: Comments or reactions from guests regarding their dining experience. Staff may solicit feedback or pass customer comments to management to improve service.

Customer service: Assisting guests, ensuring their needs are met, and offering a pleasant dining experience from start to finish.

De-canting: Pouring wine from a bottle into a decanter allows it to 'breathe' and enhance its flavour before serving.

Dessert: The final course of a meal. Sweet items like cakes, pies, or ice cream are typically served with coffee or after-dinner beverages.

Doorperson: A staff member stationed at the entrance of a building who assists guests with entering, leaving, and luggage handling, as well as hailing taxis.


Eco-tourism: Tourism that focuses on visiting natural areas while promoting conservation efforts, supporting local communities, and minimising environmental impact.

Escort: A staff member who accompanies guests to their tents/rooms or seating areas, particularly in high-end establishments, to ensure comfort and guide them to the correct location.

Etiquette: The standard behaviour and conduct expected from a waitperson, including politeness, attentiveness, and maintaining a professional appearance while interacting with customers.

Event planning: Organising and coordinating events, such as conferences, weddings, banquets, or meetings, at hospitality venues.

Event space: A designated area for hosting meetings, conferences, parties, and other events.



Exhausting leave: The situation in which a staff member has used all of their accrued leave days. In such cases, they may need to take unpaid leave or request special consideration from the employer.

Extended leave: Leave that exceeds the standard duration, such as additional time taken off due to prolonged illness or other exceptional circumstances. Extended leave may be unpaid or subject to specific policies in the workplace.

Family responsibility leave: Paid leave granted to staff to attend to family emergencies or responsibilities, such as a child's illness or a family member's death. South African staff are entitled to 3 days of family responsibility leave per year after completing 4 months of continuous service.

Family-style service: A type of service where large portions of food are served to the table, and guests help themselves to share dishes, often seen in casual or group settings.

Field guide: A person trained to provide information on wildlife, plant life, and geography during outdoor excursions, often specialising in the natural history of a specific region.

First course/starter: The initial part of a meal, often light dishes like soup, salad, or appetisers, served before the main course.

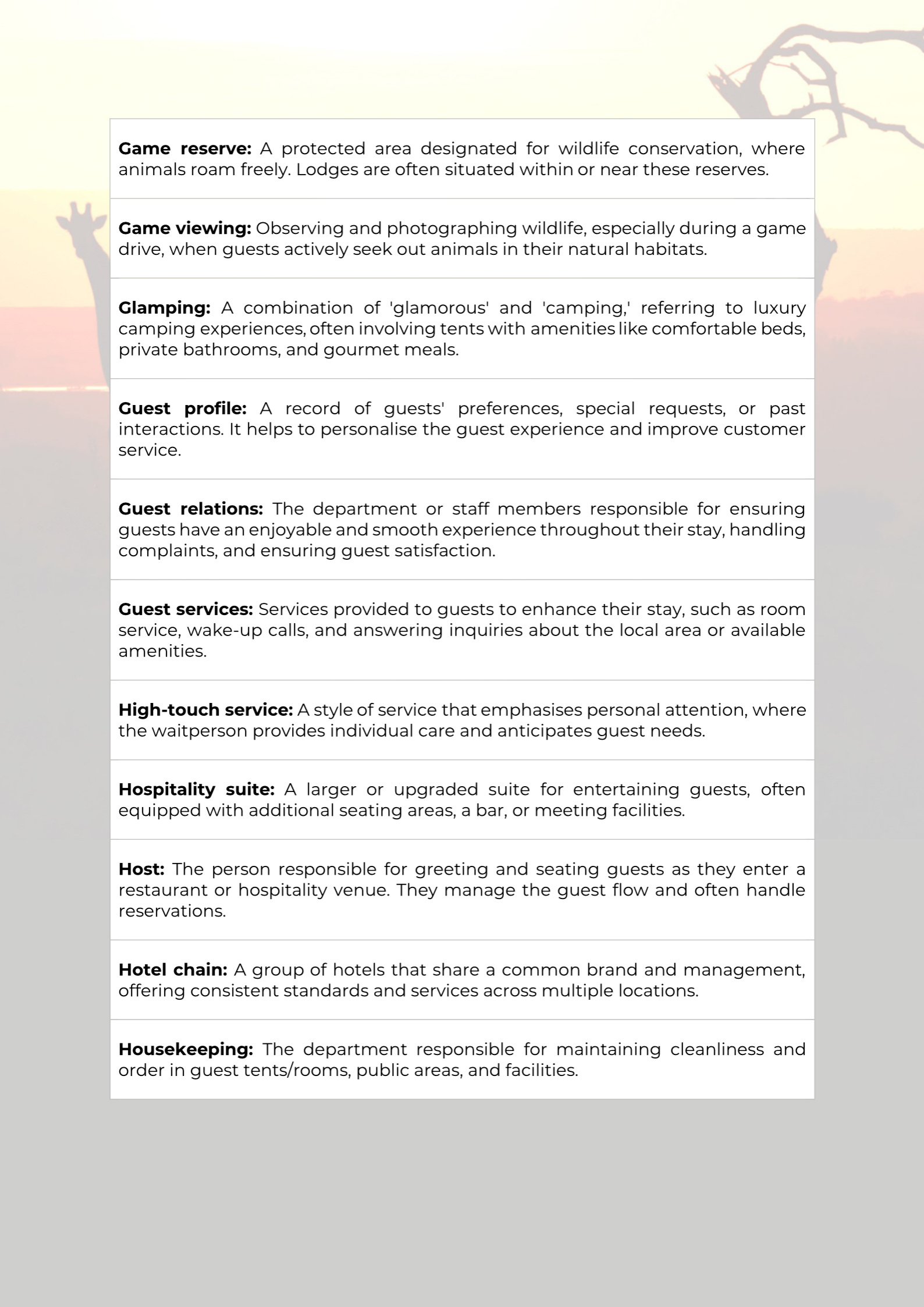
Front desk agent: The person responsible for checking guests in and out, answering questions, managing reservations, and handling guest concerns or requests.

Front desk/reception: The main area where guests check-in, request services, and interact with reception staff.

Front of House (FOH): The area where guests interact with staff. This includes the reception desk, dining area, lobby, and concierge services.

Front of House manager: The person responsible for overseeing all FOH operations, ensuring excellent customer service, managing staff, and resolving guest complaints or issues.

Game drive: A guided tour through a wildlife reserve or national park in a vehicle, where guests can observe and photograph wildlife.



Game reserve: A protected area designated for wildlife conservation, where animals roam freely. Lodges are often situated within or near these reserves.

Game viewing: Observing and photographing wildlife, especially during a game drive, when guests actively seek out animals in their natural habitats.

Glamping: A combination of 'glamorous' and 'camping,' referring to luxury camping experiences, often involving tents with amenities like comfortable beds, private bathrooms, and gourmet meals.

Guest profile: A record of guests' preferences, special requests, or past interactions. It helps to personalise the guest experience and improve customer service.

Guest relations: The department or staff members responsible for ensuring guests have an enjoyable and smooth experience throughout their stay, handling complaints, and ensuring guest satisfaction.

Guest services: Services provided to guests to enhance their stay, such as room service, wake-up calls, and answering inquiries about the local area or available amenities.

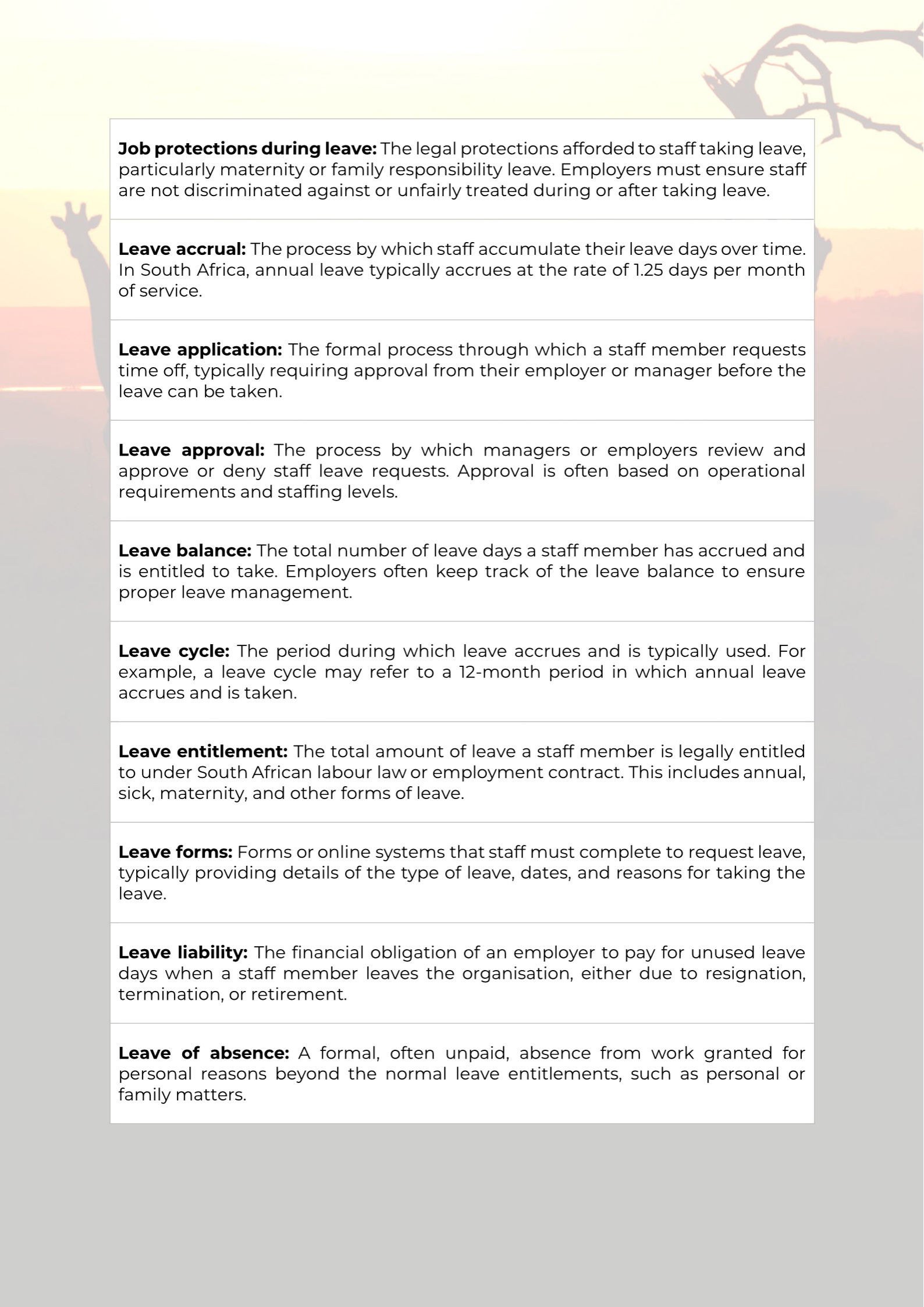
High-touch service: A style of service that emphasises personal attention, where the waitperson provides individual care and anticipates guest needs.

Hospitality suite: A larger or upgraded suite for entertaining guests, often equipped with additional seating areas, a bar, or meeting facilities.

Host: The person responsible for greeting and seating guests as they enter a restaurant or hospitality venue. They manage the guest flow and often handle reservations.

Hotel chain: A group of hotels that share a common brand and management, offering consistent standards and services across multiple locations.

Housekeeping: The department responsible for maintaining cleanliness and order in guest tents/rooms, public areas, and facilities.



Job protections during leave: The legal protections afforded to staff taking leave, particularly maternity or family responsibility leave. Employers must ensure staff are not discriminated against or unfairly treated during or after taking leave.

Leave accrual: The process by which staff accumulate their leave days over time. In South Africa, annual leave typically accrues at the rate of 1.25 days per month of service.

Leave application: The formal process through which a staff member requests time off, typically requiring approval from their employer or manager before the leave can be taken.

Leave approval: The process by which managers or employers review and approve or deny staff leave requests. Approval is often based on operational requirements and staffing levels.

Leave balance: The total number of leave days a staff member has accrued and is entitled to take. Employers often keep track of the leave balance to ensure proper leave management.

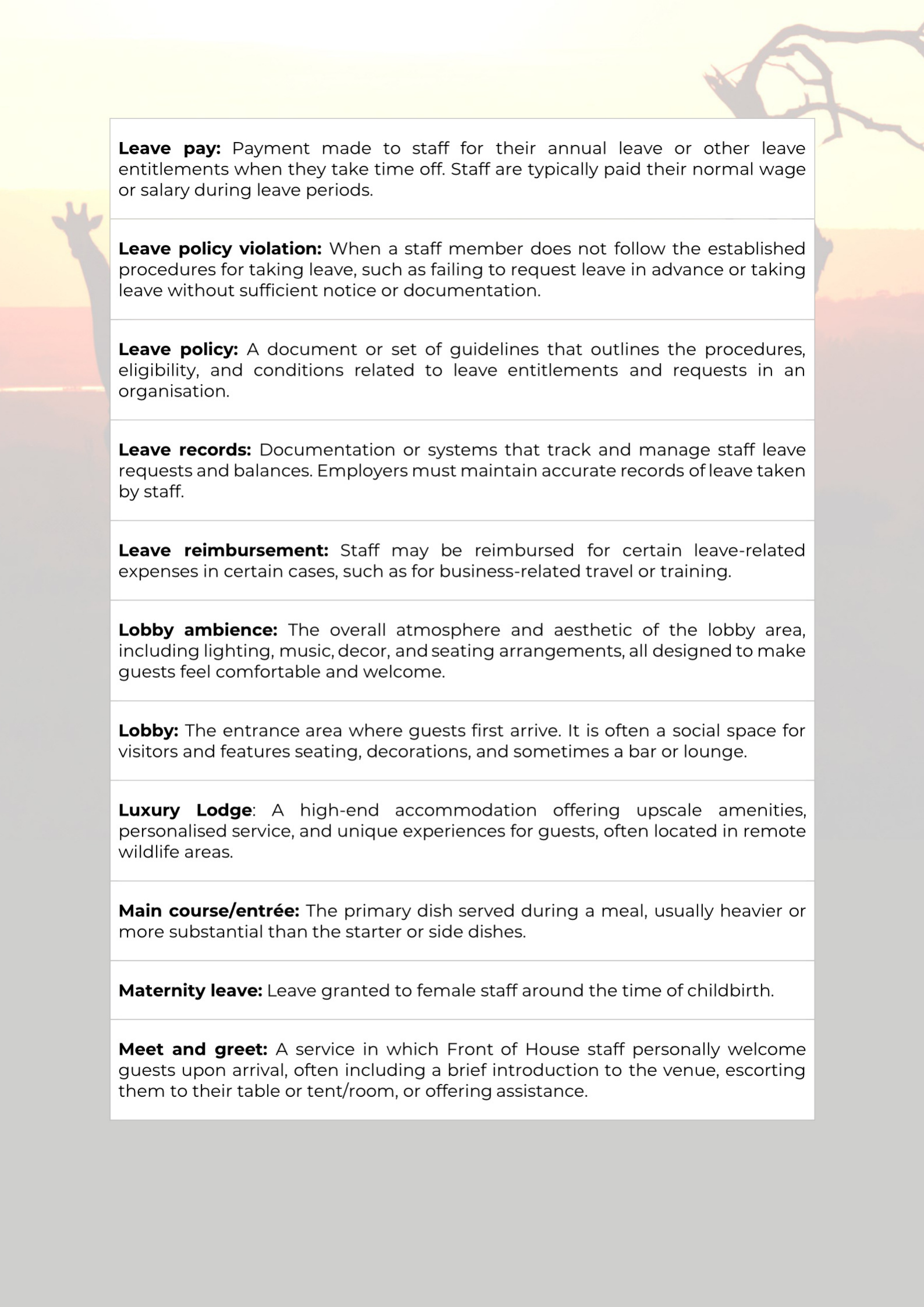
Leave cycle: The period during which leave accrues and is typically used. For example, a leave cycle may refer to a 12-month period in which annual leave accrues and is taken.

Leave entitlement: The total amount of leave a staff member is legally entitled to under South African labour law or employment contract. This includes annual, sick, maternity, and other forms of leave.

Leave forms: Forms or online systems that staff must complete to request leave, typically providing details of the type of leave, dates, and reasons for taking the leave.

Leave liability: The financial obligation of an employer to pay for unused leave days when a staff member leaves the organisation, either due to resignation, termination, or retirement.

Leave of absence: A formal, often unpaid, absence from work granted for personal reasons beyond the normal leave entitlements, such as personal or family matters.



Leave pay: Payment made to staff for their annual leave or other leave entitlements when they take time off. Staff are typically paid their normal wage or salary during leave periods.

Leave policy violation: When a staff member does not follow the established procedures for taking leave, such as failing to request leave in advance or taking leave without sufficient notice or documentation.

Leave policy: A document or set of guidelines that outlines the procedures, eligibility, and conditions related to leave entitlements and requests in an organisation.

Leave records: Documentation or systems that track and manage staff leave requests and balances. Employers must maintain accurate records of leave taken by staff.

Leave reimbursement: Staff may be reimbursed for certain leave-related expenses in certain cases, such as for business-related travel or training.

Lobby ambience: The overall atmosphere and aesthetic of the lobby area, including lighting, music, decor, and seating arrangements, all designed to make guests feel comfortable and welcome.

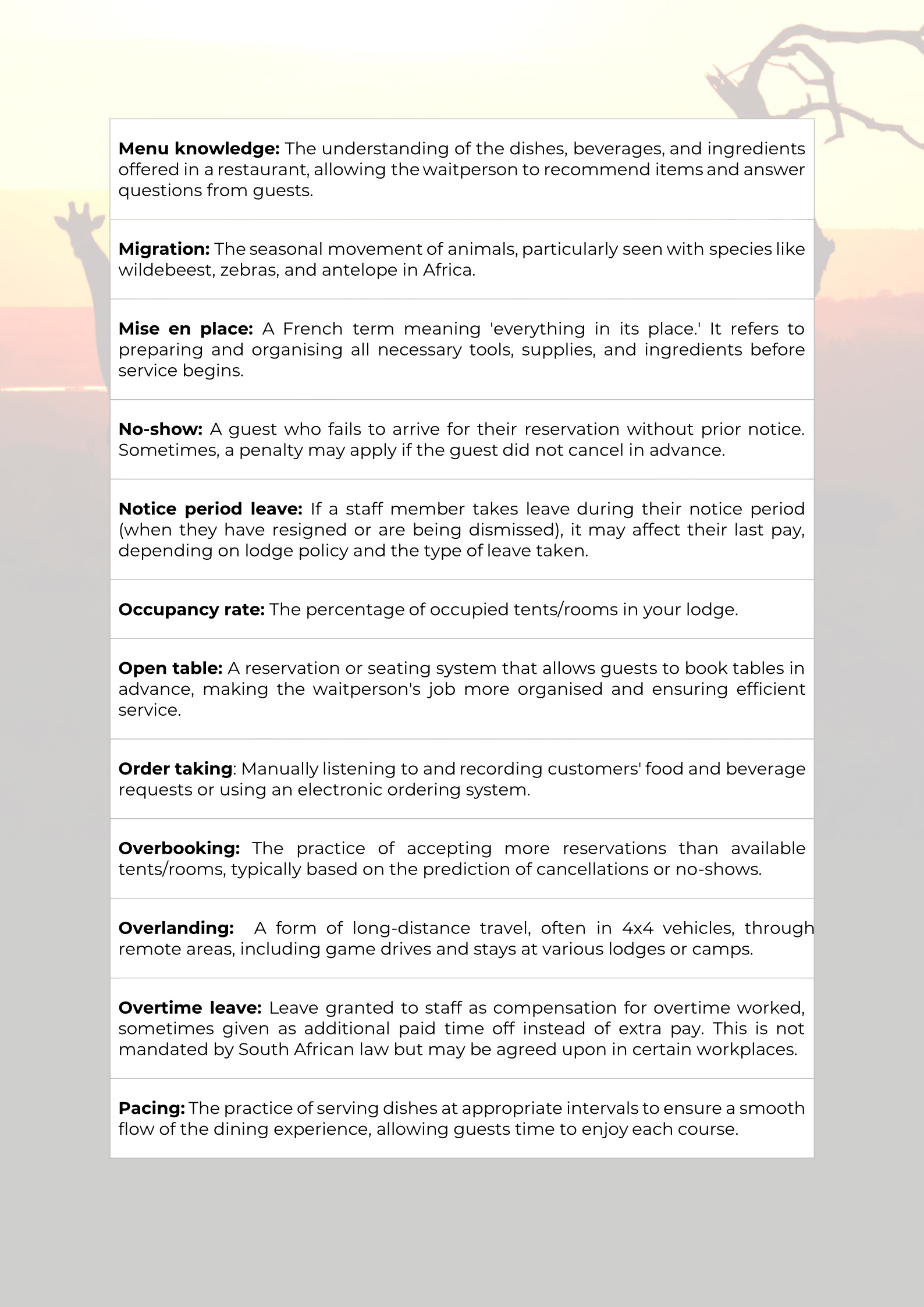
Lobby: The entrance area where guests first arrive. It is often a social space for visitors and features seating, decorations, and sometimes a bar or lounge.

Luxury Lodge: A high-end accommodation offering upscale amenities, personalised service, and unique experiences for guests, often located in remote wildlife areas.

Main course/entrée: The primary dish served during a meal, usually heavier or more substantial than the starter or side dishes.

Maternity leave: Leave granted to female staff around the time of childbirth.

Meet and greet: A service in which Front of House staff personally welcome guests upon arrival, often including a brief introduction to the venue, escorting them to their table or tent/room, or offering assistance.



Menu knowledge: The understanding of the dishes, beverages, and ingredients offered in a restaurant, allowing the waitperson to recommend items and answer questions from guests.

Migration: The seasonal movement of animals, particularly seen with species like wildebeest, zebras, and antelope in Africa.

Mise en place: A French term meaning 'everything in its place.' It refers to preparing and organising all necessary tools, supplies, and ingredients before service begins.

No-show: A guest who fails to arrive for their reservation without prior notice. Sometimes, a penalty may apply if the guest did not cancel in advance.

Notice period leave: If a staff member takes leave during their notice period (when they have resigned or are being dismissed), it may affect their last pay, depending on lodge policy and the type of leave taken.

Occupancy rate: The percentage of occupied tents/rooms in your lodge.

Open table: A reservation or seating system that allows guests to book tables in advance, making the waitperson's job more organised and ensuring efficient service.

Order taking: Manually listening to and recording customers' food and beverage requests or using an electronic ordering system.

Overbooking: The practice of accepting more reservations than available tents/rooms, typically based on the prediction of cancellations or no-shows.

Overlanding: A form of long-distance travel, often in 4x4 vehicles, through remote areas, including game drives and stays at various lodges or camps.

Overtime leave: Leave granted to staff as compensation for overtime worked, sometimes given as additional paid time off instead of extra pay. This is not mandated by South African law but may be agreed upon in certain workplaces.

Pacing: The practice of serving dishes at appropriate intervals to ensure a smooth flow of the dining experience, allowing guests time to enjoy each course.

Paternity leave: Leave granted to fathers around the time of the birth of their child.

Photographic safari: Specifically tailored for photographers, often with expert guidance on techniques.

PMS (Property Management System): A software application for reservations, guest check-ins and check-outs, tent/room assignments, billing, and other operations.

Point of Sale (POS): The system used by front-of-house staff to process orders and payments for goods or services, such as meals in a restaurant or charges for accommodations.

Point of service: The point at which a waitperson interacts directly with customers, taking orders, serving meals, and addressing customer needs.

Post-arrival: The period after guests have checked in, during which they may request additional services, amenities, or local information.

Pre-arrival: Before guests arrive, staff may communicate with guests to confirm bookings, request preferences, or offer additional services.

Private reserve: A privately owned wildlife area or park where game drives occur, offering a more exclusive experience than public national parks.

Prix fixe: A menu offering a set number of courses at a fixed price, often with limited options per course, typically used for special events or restaurant promotions.

Public holiday leave: Staff are entitled to take a day off with pay on national public holidays in South Africa unless they are required to work on the public holiday as per their employment contract.

Queue: The order in which tasks or orders are completed. A waitperson may need to manage the queue of guests waiting for a table or the sequence of orders in the kitchen.

Ranger/guide: A trained professional who leads guests on game drives and bush walks, sharing knowledge about local flora, fauna, and conservation efforts.

Rate plan: A specific rate or pricing structure that applies to tents/rooms or services, such as a non-refundable rate, senior discount, or weekend special.

Rate: The price charged for a tent/room or service, often based on location, time of year, and tent/room type.

Reception: The area where guests check in and out. It is also where guests inquire or request services during their stay.

Refill: Providing customers with additional beverages, water, or condiments as needed during their meal.

Reservation system: A software or tool for managing bookings for tents/rooms or dining reservations. It keeps track of availability, guest details, and special requests.

Reservation: A prior arrangement made by a guest to secure a tent/room, table, or service at a hospitality establishment.

Resort: A leisure-focused property that offers various activities and amenities, such as spas, golf courses, pools, and organised tours.

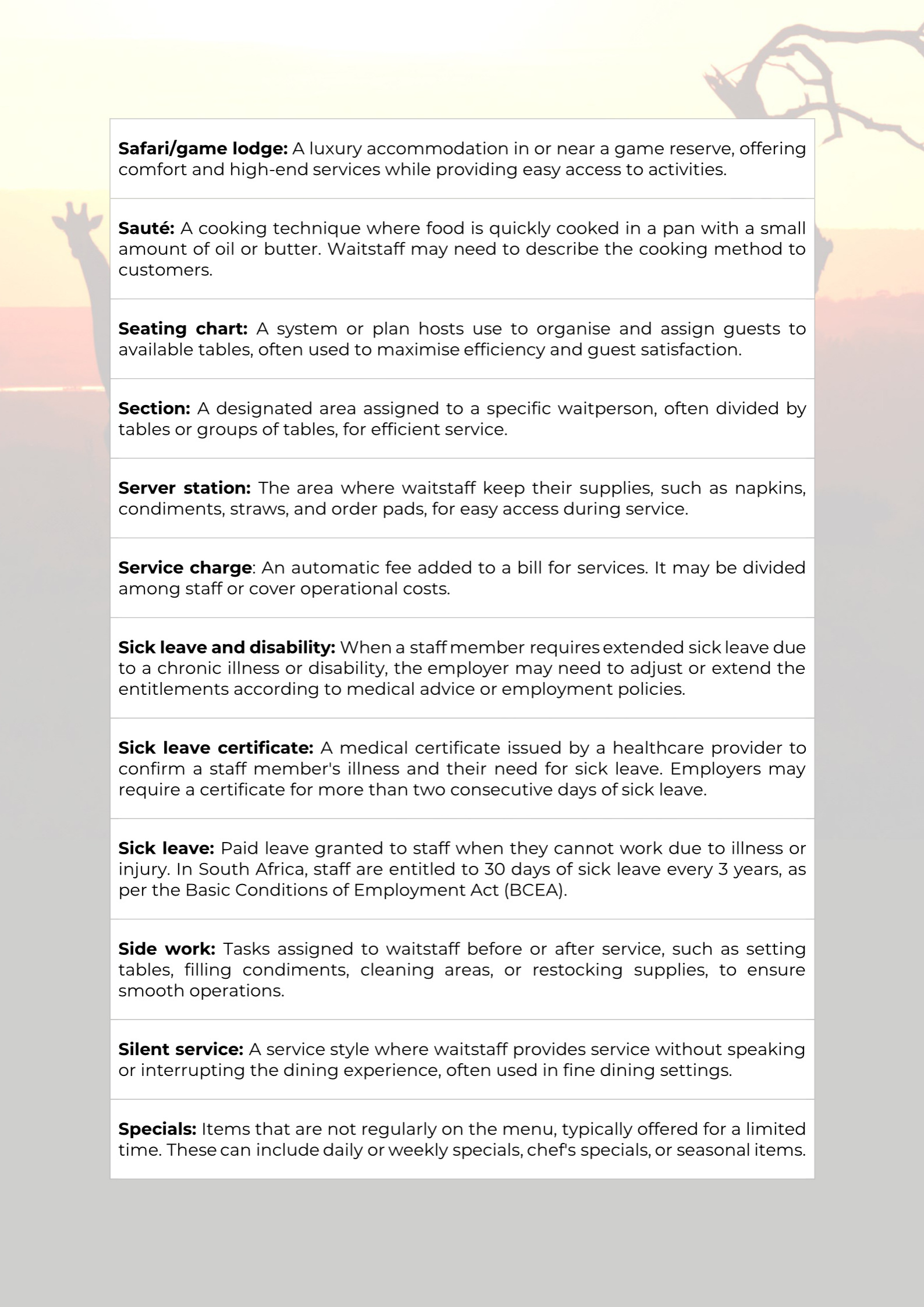
Room assignment: Assigning a specific tent/room to guests based on their reservation, preferences, and availability.

Room service: A service that allows guests to order food, beverages, or other items delivered directly to their tent/room.

Runners: Staff who assist waitstaff by delivering food and beverages from the kitchen or bar to the customers' tables. They may also clear empty plates from the table.

Safari/game drive vehicle: A specially designed vehicle used for game drives, often open-sided for better visibility, and built to navigate rugged terrain in wildlife reserves.

Safari/game drive: A journey, often to a wildlife-rich area, to observe, photograph, and study animals in their natural habitat. Originating from Swahili, the word 'safari' means 'journey.'



Safari/game lodge: A luxury accommodation in or near a game reserve, offering comfort and high-end services while providing easy access to activities.

Sauté: A cooking technique where food is quickly cooked in a pan with a small amount of oil or butter. Waitstaff may need to describe the cooking method to customers.

Seating chart: A system or plan hosts use to organise and assign guests to available tables, often used to maximise efficiency and guest satisfaction.

Section: A designated area assigned to a specific waitperson, often divided by tables or groups of tables, for efficient service.

Server station: The area where waitstaff keep their supplies, such as napkins, condiments, straws, and order pads, for easy access during service.

Service charge: An automatic fee added to a bill for services. It may be divided among staff or cover operational costs.

Sick leave and disability: When a staff member requires extended sick leave due to a chronic illness or disability, the employer may need to adjust or extend the entitlements according to medical advice or employment policies.

Sick leave certificate: A medical certificate issued by a healthcare provider to confirm a staff member's illness and their need for sick leave. Employers may require a certificate for more than two consecutive days of sick leave.

Sick leave: Paid leave granted to staff when they cannot work due to illness or injury. In South Africa, staff are entitled to 30 days of sick leave every 3 years, as per the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA).

Side work: Tasks assigned to waitstaff before or after service, such as setting tables, filling condiments, cleaning areas, or restocking supplies, to ensure smooth operations.

Silent service: A service style where waitstaff provides service without speaking or interrupting the dining experience, often used in fine dining settings.

Specials: Items that are not regularly on the menu, typically offered for a limited time. These can include daily or weekly specials, chef's specials, or seasonal items.

Sunset safari: Typically takes place in the late afternoon or early evening, when many animals are more active, providing the chance to witness wildlife at sunset.

Sustainability: The practice of operating a hospitality business in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, focusing on energy conservation, waste reduction, and local community support.

Sustainable tourism: Tourism that seeks to minimise environmental impact and support the welfare of local communities and ecosystems.

Table setting: The arrangement of utensils, glasses, plates, and napkins on a dining table before guests are seated. It ensures a pleasant and functional dining experience.

Table touch: The waitperson checking in with guests during their meal to ensure everything is satisfactory, offers additional beverages, or resolves any issues.

Tented camp: A type of accommodation in a lodge, often designed to provide a luxurious 'glamping' experience while still being close to nature.

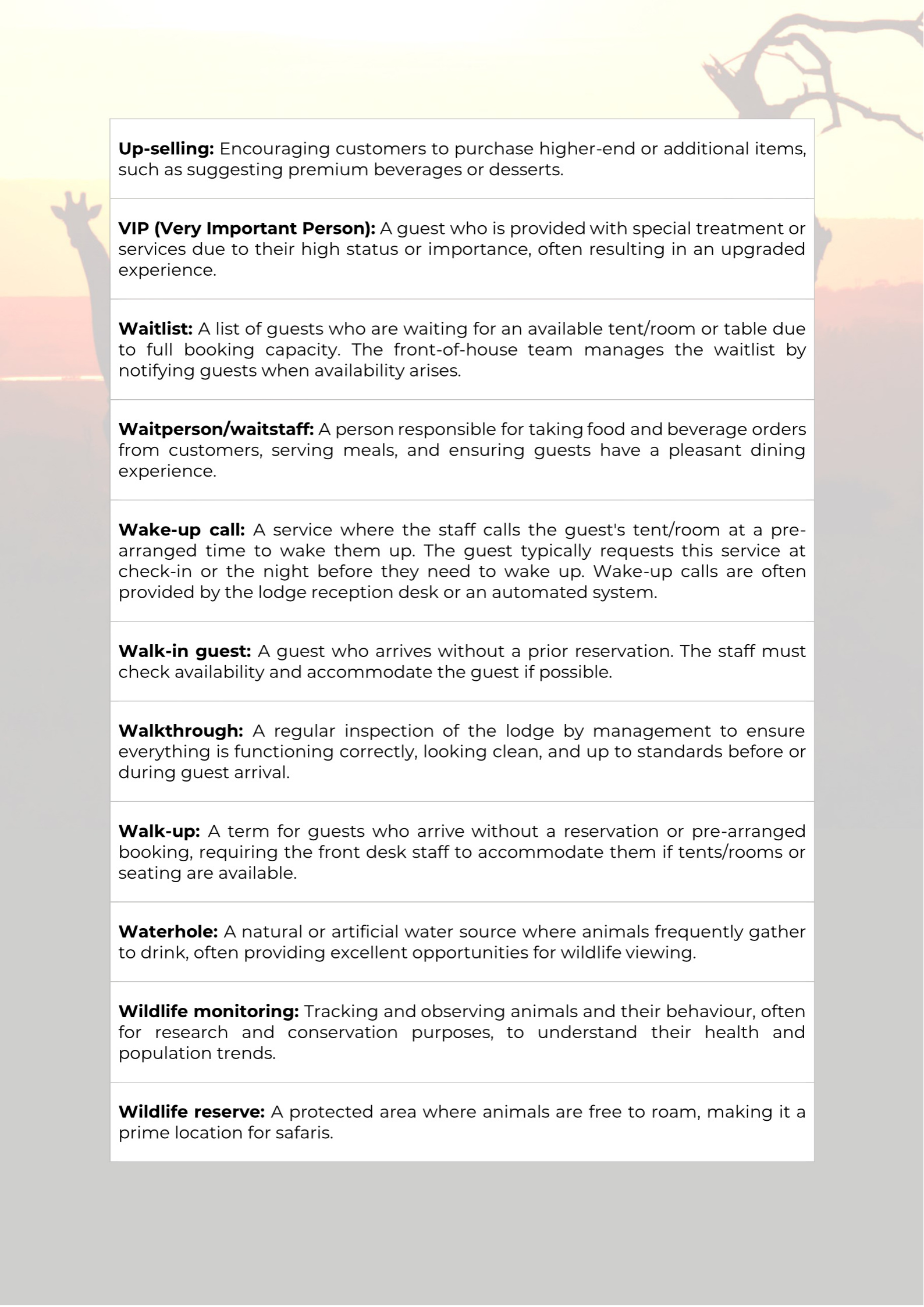
Tipping/gratuity: Giving extra money for service as a token of appreciation for exceptional service.

Tracker: A tracker is responsible for locating, identifying, and following wildlife in a game reserve, primarily focusing on big game. The tracker works closely with field guides to ensure the safety and enjoyment of guests while maintaining ethical and responsible tracking practices. The role requires in-depth knowledge of animal behaviour, wilderness survival, and the ability to interpret environmental clues.

Tracking: Identifying and following animal tracks and signs to locate wildlife. It is often part of a guided experience, helping guests spot animals.

Turndown service: A service provided in the evening where staff prepare guest tents/rooms for sleep, often involving tasks like folding back bed covers and leaving small touches like chocolates.

Unpaid leave: Leave taken by staff without pay, typically when they have exhausted their paid leave entitlements or in situations where they are not entitled to paid leave.



Up-selling: Encouraging customers to purchase higher-end or additional items, such as suggesting premium beverages or desserts.

VIP (Very Important Person): A guest who is provided with special treatment or services due to their high status or importance, often resulting in an upgraded experience.

Waitlist: A list of guests who are waiting for an available tent/room or table due to full booking capacity. The front-of-house team manages the waitlist by notifying guests when availability arises.

Waitperson/waitstaff: A person responsible for taking food and beverage orders from customers, serving meals, and ensuring guests have a pleasant dining experience.

Wake-up call: A service where the staff calls the guest's tent/room at a pre-arranged time to wake them up. The guest typically requests this service at check-in or the night before they need to wake up. Wake-up calls are often provided by the lodge reception desk or an automated system.

Walk-in guest: A guest who arrives without a prior reservation. The staff must check availability and accommodate the guest if possible.

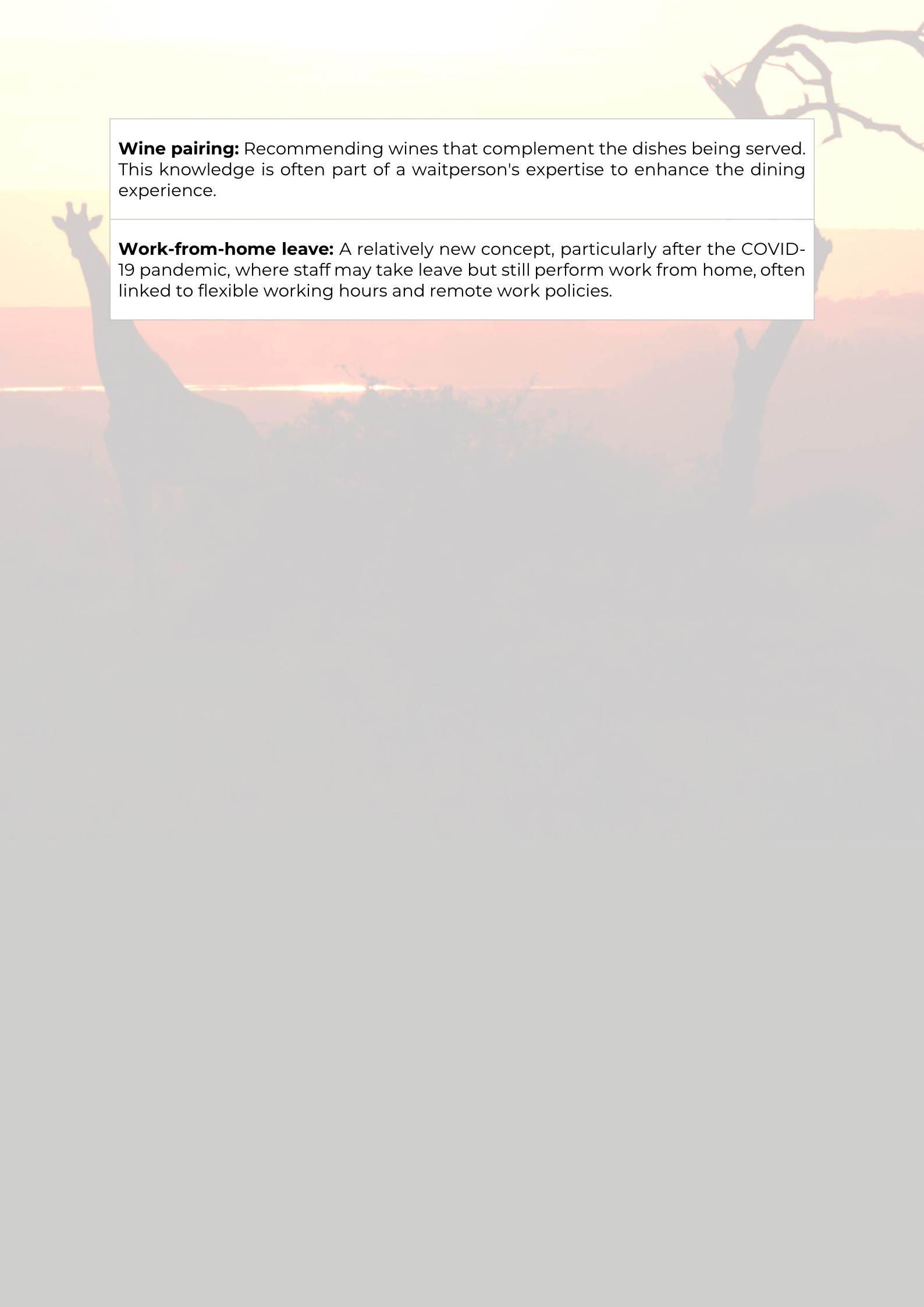
Walkthrough: A regular inspection of the lodge by management to ensure everything is functioning correctly, looking clean, and up to standards before or during guest arrival.

Walk-up: A term for guests who arrive without a reservation or pre-arranged booking, requiring the front desk staff to accommodate them if tents/rooms or seating are available.

Waterhole: A natural or artificial water source where animals frequently gather to drink, often providing excellent opportunities for wildlife viewing.

Wildlife monitoring: Tracking and observing animals and their behaviour, often for research and conservation purposes, to understand their health and population trends.

Wildlife reserve: A protected area where animals are free to roam, making it a prime location for safaris.



Wine pairing: Recommending wines that complement the dishes being served. This knowledge is often part of a waitperson's expertise to enhance the dining experience.

Work-from-home leave: A relatively new concept, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, where staff may take leave but still perform work from home, often linked to flexible working hours and remote work policies.