



TSWALU PRESS RELEASE

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BURIED IN THE KALAHARI, A RESTAURANT THAT COULD EXIST NOWHERE ELSE

Luke Dale Roberts opens Boscia at Tswalu: built into the earth, beside an ancient forest, under celestial skies.

Boscia opened in August 2026 under the creative direction of Luke Dale Roberts, creator of The Test Kitchen, which during its celebrated run ranked among the World's 50 Best Restaurants and won the Eat Out Restaurant of the Year title six times. Boscia is, by his own description, his most personal project, and is where that restless pursuit of the perfect plate meets a landscape worthy of it.

The restaurant takes its name from the shepherd's tree, *Boscia albitrunca*, the ecological keystone of Tswalu's semi-arid landscape: a species that survives where little else endures, sending its roots as far as 68 metres into the earth to find water far below the surface. That relationship between what is visible and the hidden, between the surface and what lies beneath, is the logic that shaped everything about Boscia. Built into the earth beneath a century-old farmhouse and surrounded by what may be the world's largest congregation of shepherd's trees, Boscia is one of the most audacious fine dining ventures South Africa has seen, and one of the most remote.

The restaurant has been conceived as an extension of the safari rather than a departure from it. Guests arrive after exploring the biologically significant Tswalu wilderness and find the same landscape waiting for them at the table. The kitchen is simply where the Kalahari continues.

The dining experience unfolds across three distinct spaces. It begins at Boscia House, a century-old farmhouse where guests are welcomed with snacks and cocktails. From there, guests descend into the root cellar: gallery, library and working larder. Its shelves tell the story of a kitchen in permanent conversation with one of the most challenging environments on earth: row upon row of fermented, pickled and preserved ingredients, each one a solution the Kalahari demanded.

"The root cellar is a living, breathing beast. We hope only to keep feeding it with newness." – Alwijn Burger, Creative Director

A gallery beyond is anchored by a life-size bronze sculpture of the shepherd's tree by Nic Bladen, who lived on the reserve during an artist residency in 2015. Then the dining room: a return to the elements, the kitchen visible through an open pass, the Kalahari framed through glass beyond.

"Restraint is its own kind of theatre. It encourages immersion in the environment without competing with it." – Alwijn Burger, Creative Director

The five-course menu is led by head chef Dillan Kannemeyer and his team. Luke Dale Roberts' classical European training and Asian influences sit alongside venison, tsamma melons, Kalahari salt, local dates and wild rosemary. Preservation is at the centre of the kitchen's philosophy. Meat is predominantly sourced, as much as 90 percent, from a butcher based in the Kalahari itself. South African wine pairings and non-alcoholic herbal infusion pairings are available throughout.

At the close of the evening, guests are collected beneath a large boscia tree that gives the restaurant its name. By then, the restaurant has receded to a narrow strip of light behind them, and the night sky has widened overhead.

"Tswalu got under my skin very quickly. There is enormous respect for the landscape, for conservation, for creating something meaningful rather than simply impressive. At this stage of my career, that matters to me." – Luke Dale Roberts

Every object on the table was commissioned for a specific dish, emerging from conversations between the chefs and South African artists and craftspeople including Conrad Hicks, Roché Muller, Wim Botha, Anton Kock and Hadley Craig.

"Tswalu has always been a place that rewards patience. Boscia is an expression of that same philosophy. Nothing about it is obvious. Everything about it, we hope, is worth the journey." – Jonathan Oppenheimer

Tswalu Kalahari Reserve (Pty) Ltd

T. +27 53 781 9331 | **E.** info@tswalu.com | **W.** tswalu.com

Farm Korannaberg 296, Van Zylsrus, 8467, South Africa | P.O. Box 1081, Kuruman, 8460, South Africa

DIRECTORS: DAT LAMB (BRITISH) | DN MACFADYEN | CL OPPENHEIMER | JEM OPPENHEIMER | NF OPPENHEIMER
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A dinner at Boscia is included for guests staying two or more nights at Tswalu. From October 2026, Boscia will also open to the public for Saturday lunches. Bookings open on the first of each month at 08h00 for the following month. For Saturday lunch reservations: book through Dineplan or contact boscia@tswalu.com. For in-house guest reservations: reservations@tswalu.com.

About Tswalu Kalahari

Boscia is part of the Tswalu experience. Tswalu Kalahari is a 118,000-hectare private reserve on the southernmost edge of the Kalahari, one of Africa's most biologically significant and most remote landscapes, in the custody of the Oppenheimer family since 1999. It is malaria-free, home to three camps: Motse, Loapi and the exclusive-use Tarkuni homestead. Every guest is guaranteed a private vehicle, guide and tracker, with unlimited time in the field. Conservation is the reserve's founding purpose, and everything at Tswalu, including Boscia, is shaped by that commitment to the landscape and the life it sustains.

Notes to Editors

For public Saturday lunch reservations, a minimum of 72 hours' cancellation notice is required. Dietary requirements, including pescatarian, vegetarian and vegan menus, can be accommodated with 72 hours' advance notice. A children's menu is available with 24 hours' notice.

Media Enquiries: rachel@imagine-team.com

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