

## **UJ Island**

### **A historical overview:**

The UJ Island is situated in the Free State, close to Deneysville. What makes the Island so unique is that UJ is the only university in the world that owns its own Island.

The Island originally formed part of the Oase farm. Victor Edouard d'Assonville, the son of a French nobleman, owned the farm from 1902 to 1934. He and his wife, Maria, single-handedly broke stones and transported them with an ox-wagon to the place where they built the stone dwelling. This is where the UJ buildings are today.

Oase was on the banks of the Vaal River. It was isolated and therefore communication took place by means of mirrors. By agreement, messages were sent with a number of flashes. Communication took place between Oase and Vaalbank in the Transvaal, where the school was situated.

When the Vaal dam was completed in 1934, the farm was repossessed and transformed into the Big Island, when it became Government property until 1973.

The UJ Island is still an isolated place to a large extent. Passengers and goods can be transported only by boat or helicopter from the Gauteng bank. The boat trip takes about 15 minutes.

All these factors make the UJ Island a unique and ideal place – away from the busy city life.

### **What can the Island be used for?**

The UJ Island is the ideal place for conferences, seminars, training courses, day visits and youth camps. The Island is mainly used for the University, but we also invite groups from the business community, churches, schools and individuals. The facility is suited to small and large groups, although a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 100 people are required. The Island is also available for day visitors in a group. A day visit includes a boat trip around the Island, a game drive and a braai.

## Game and nature



The Island has been uninhabited since the building of the dam wall in 1933. Thanks to UJ's commitment to nature conservation and the strict nature conservation policy that is followed on the Island, there is a rich source of wildlife with a great variety of plant, animal and bird species on the island.

The help of donations and exchange transactions, the University has succeeded in settling a great variety of animals on the Island. Today the Island is host to blesbuck, springbuck, zebras, impala, gazelle, antelope as well as a number of tortoises and various bird species such as the grass owl, cape redbreast, heron and nighthawk. As time goes by, more and more birds are settling on the Island, especially because the Island is regularly patrolled and therefore a true birds' paradise.



## Accommodation and facilities



The UJ Island offers sleeping facilities for 100 people. Visitors are accommodated in two sleeping halls and 2 guest houses, each with its own bath and toilet facilities; a dining hall with kitchen facilities; one conference hall for 100 people and a smaller hall with seating for 60 people each.

In addition to this, there are a variety of sports and recreation facilities available to visitors: Braai facilities, a swimming-pool, volleyball and a jukskei court and hiking trails.

The facilities are managed by a married couple living on the Island, and they are responsible for the catering during the camps.



## **Tariff**

The package that is available includes the following:

- One boat trip to and from the Island
- Sleeping facilities (bedding included)
- Three meals per day
- Use of the furnished lecture halls, each equipped with an overhead projector, whiteboards and blackboards
- Full use of the braai and leisure facilities

For the cost of above-mentioned, please refer to attached brochure.

## **Enquiries**

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