



THE HOLISTIC HORSE SYMPOSIUM

The Kingdom of Eswatini, 4 - 7th April 2024

INFORMATION

Barefoot trimmer, Giacomo Pinna, has always dreamt of holding a horse symposium, and on his first visit to Chubeka Trails, Eswatini, his vision landed. Giacomo shared his vision and his belief that Mlilwane Game Sanctuary, the home of Chubeka Trails, was the perfect venue.

Late 2022, Giacomo's vision began taking shape. Through the past 5 years, Chubeka Trails has had the privilege of working with amazing equine practitioners, all of them becoming firm friends. Covid was an especially hard time, but it provided space for dreams, new perspective and new beginnings. It is time to come together, learn, share and bring fun and deeper, holistic knowledge to our equine habits!

There are so many approaches, so many aspects and factors that come into play with horses and our horsey selves. This Symposium provides a little bit of everything that can fit into 3 and a bit days, giving a broad yet powerful insight to fundamental principles often overlooked and not well known.

- **Learning Theory** – discover how the horse learns, explore our ethical responsibility around working with horses and learn to get there faster, kinder and more effectively, by understanding how they perceive our aids, and learning how to identify and interpret their messages. You will be amazed at how little we know!
Presenter – Ashleigh Sanderson, Kuda Guru. www.kudaguru.com
- **Biomechanics** – fast becoming a buzz word in equine circles! How do bodies work? And when you bring two bodies of two different species together, how best do we get them to work in unison and harmony? Are we working with natural motion, or against it?
Presenter – Ashleigh Sanderson, Kuda Guru. www.kudaguru.com
- **Proprioception & In-Hand Training** – many of us just want to ride. Deep inside, we yearn for a better connection with our horse, however deep our current one is. Working with a horse on the ground allows a rider to observe their horse's responses in a far more enlightening manner, growing appreciation and understanding and providing a strong possibility of unlocking blockages in riding – both horse and human!
Presenter – Ashleigh Sanderson, Kuda Guru. www.kudaguru.com
- **Homeopathy** – The power of nature works super well on horses and ourselves! There are strong opinions for and against natural and pharmaceutical approaches, but perhaps there is space for both? A pharmacist friend once shared "There is science in everything. Even plants are chemicals." Another thought "Modern medicine was once the alternative medicine". Chubeka Trails has been working with local Homeopath Barbara Braun for the past year with astonishing, fast and cost-effective results. The more we know and the more options we have, the more able we are to provide the best for our horses, and potentially ourselves.
Presenter – Barbara Braun. www.kbraunweb.com/homeopathyproject/team.asp

- **Hoof Health & Diagnostics** – “No hoof no horse” they say! So, what can we learn from our horse’s feet? And what do we do about the signs we read? Nutrition, environmental changes and treatments all play out in the hoof. The hoof itself plays an essential role in the circulation of the horse... are we aware of what we do? Do we give the feet time? If we want to go barefoot, how do we transition successfully?
Presenter – Christine and Giacomo Pinna, Caballo. www.caballo.co.za
- **Nutrition** – every being requires certain nutrients to operate optimally. Every environment presents unique challenges, toxins and don’t forget stress! There are so many supplements and feeds on the market – how do we navigate this space to best provide for our horse’s health?
Presenter – Shelhi Horne, Diets By Design. www.dietsbydesign.co.za
- **Colic & Gut** – Such a broad topic! Gut health has fast become “the thing” in health worldwide. How does it work? What impacts the gut? What signs do we look out for? How do we respond? How do we keep our horses healthy?
Presenter – Dr Hildegard Setzkorn, Chartwell Equine Clinic
- **Lameness** – Another broad topic! Lameness presents in the legs, but what are the latest theories and revelations around cause? How do we respond to lame horses?
Presenter – Dr Hildegard Setzkorn, Chartwell Equine Clinic
- **Neuromuscular Based (Horse) Dentistry** – can the balance in the mouth honestly play out in the body of the horse? How is this possible? How many dentists assess the horse’s physique before and after working in their mouths? This development in dentistry is fascinating. An added bonus - Join us for a practical session on the impact of dentistry balance on the physical movement of a horse.
Presenter – Lara Malherbe, Mercy Balance Equine Dentistry www.mercybalancedentistry.co.za
- **Fascia Release** – Fascia work has definitely made its way into regular horse welfare work, with the continual development of body work and fascia release proving highly beneficial to horses and riders worldwide. How does it all work? We present theory and practical sessions, and as a huge bonus, we have integrated fascia with biomechanics in a session!
Presenter – Liza Kimble, Equine Fascia & Trauma Release www.lizakimble.com
- **Saddle Fitting** – we place a saddle on our horse every day. It is usually a rigid structure on a highly mobile part of the horse. What do we check to ensure we reduce the resistance and allow free movement of our horses?
Presenter – Wihan Ras, Soul Equine www.soulequine.co.za
- **Trail Riding** – A whole lot of theory and learning requires processing! There is nothing like a ride out in nature to open the heart and mind, and remind us of why we do what we do! It is amazing how many arena riders are not confident on outrides – and how undervalued a great Trail horse is! Join us for an hour in the morning, experience proprioception in play!
Chubeka Trails, Mlilwane Game Sanctuary, Big Game Parks www.biggameparks.org/chubeka

**Our advice to every participant – if there is an area which provides a niggle or skepticism, sign up!
Extend yourself and put your resistance to rest, one way or another.**

HOW IT WORKS

The Holistic Horse Symposium is a full **3 Days of WOW!** from Friday 5th – Sunday 7th April with an introductory lecture at 15h00 Thursday 4th April. The opening lecture explores the vitally important topic of Learning Theory, presented by Ashleigh Sanderson of KudaGuru - a true “must attend” as it sets the tone for the entire weekend.

Registration is from 13h00 on Thursday 4th April at Mlilwane Rest Camp, ahead of the Learning Theory lecture.

Each day starts at 07h30 and is split into 4 sessions, ranging from 1 – 2,5 hours, broken by tea or lunch - vital brain breaks for maximum absorption! Each session will offer a choice of 3 topics which will run simultaneously, essentially splitting delegates into 3 groups, maximizing the benefit for all. Each topic will be repeated once or twice through the weekend, to allow participants to attend almost all topics. Some sessions are a practical follow-on from a theory lecture (eg fascia, hoof diagnostics). Participants

will sign up for the different sessions at Registration. A fun 1-hr trail ride will be available every morning session for those needing to take an appropriate “brain break” and feel hooves beneath them!

E.g	Session	Day Options – Choose one session
	07h30 – 08h30	Trail Ride / Nutrition / Saddle Fitting / Private Sessions*
	09h00 – 11h00	Learning Theory / Homeopathy / Healthy Hooves Theory
	11h30 – 13h30	Colic & Gut / Neuromuscular Dentistry / Fascia Release Theory
	14h30 – 17h00	Proprioception & In-hand / Fascia Release Prac / Hoof Diagnostics

*For own account, prearranged

HOW IT WORKS In summary:

- 4 Sessions per day (1 hr / 2 hr / 2 hr / 2.5 hr)
- Each session has 3 options
- Each lecture/practical accommodates up to 35 people
- Each session is an in-depth introduction to the subject - everyone will learn something!
- Some sessions interlink – a theory session followed by practical – best to choose accordingly
- Sign up for a variety of lectures and practical sessions, learn something new every session
- Presenters present every day & have a chance to participate and learn too!
- Presenters have an opportunity to engage in private sessions (for cost of client)

There may be adjustments to the above to facilitate logistics and maximized learning.

HOW IS IT POSSIBLE?

Each of our amazing presenters have largely contributed their time for the benefit of horses and their equestrians. They have fully subscribed to the ethos of this event and, through their commitment to a holistic approach to horse welfare, they have made this exciting event possible!

WHERE IS IT?

Snuggly nestled between Mozambique and South Africa’s Mpumalanga and KZN provinces lies the friendly **Kingdom of Eswatini**. **Mlilwane Game Sanctuary** and her trail department, **Chubeka Trails**, are located between the main towns of Mbabane and Manzini in the beautifully scenic Ezulwini Valley.

Mlilwane provides a picturesque setting, with the camp and stables built on the plains, looking up towards the mountains. The Sanctuary has plains game roaming freely, very tolerant of humans, and a fun network of trails which allows self-guided hiking, trail running and cycling. Adjacent to Mlilwane is **Swazi Lizkhar Sport Horses**, a unique competition yard, home of **Lagos**, a special warmblood sire. The lectures will take place between Mlilwane and Lizkhar with a detailed schedule to guide participants. Travel between the two venues will be minimized, and is approx. 12km.

Valid passports with 2 free pages and at least 3 months validity are required to enter Eswatini.

TRAVEL

Approximate travel distances and driving time:

JHB/PTA	375km	5.5 hrs	DBN	550km	6 hrs
NELSPRUIT	300km	3hrs	MAPUTO	300km	3 hrs

Flights into Eswatini are available with Eswatini Air www.eswatini-air.co.sz (Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Harare) and Airlink Eswatini (Johannesburg) all into our King Mswati III (KM3) Airport, roughly 100km east of Mlilwane. The Airport international code is SHO and the airport is referred to as Manzini, although it is a distance from the town. Transfer from the airport is currently by private Taxi with Leap Taxi App <https://leapsd.africa/taxi-services/riders/>. Should a large number of delegates fly in, we will charter and airport shuttle, at additional cost (times will be set). Vehicle hire needs to be arranged privately beforehand – there are no vehicles based at the airport currently. Self-drive is highly recommended to give participants independence in Eswatini. For those flying into ORT, there are various shuttles which drive from Sandton’s Gautrain and ORT to Gables Shopping Centre in Ezulwini, just 10km from Mlilwane. Transfers need to be prearranged to enable coordination. Additional Travel Information is available on request.

WHERE TO STAY

Accommodation has been provisionally booked for The Holistic Horse Symposium at both Mlilwane and Benka Lifestyle. Participants are required to book directly with chosen establishments, mentioning they are attending The Holistic Horse Symposium. Rooms are limited, but there is accommodation in the Valley (20km radius).

Mlilwane Game Sanctuary has different accommodation options in three camps:

- Rest Camp (venue) - Lontweni Self Catering Rondavels, Beehives, Rest Camp Huts, all en-suite, camping is also available
- Sondzela Backpackers, 2km from Rest Camp – comfortable 3-bed rondavels some en-suite, private rooms, dormitories and camping. Connected to the Rest Camp by a 2km walking trail.
- Reilly's Rock Hilltop Lodge – 3km from Rest Camp, an exclusive 6-room lodge, DBB
- Down Gran's Self-Catering Cottage near Reilly's Rock – 3 rooms, sleeps 6
- reservations@biggameparks.org / +268 – 25281000 / +268 – 7677 6772 (WA/Cell)
- www.biggameparks.org/mlilwane ; www.biggameparks.org/reillys ; www.biggameparks.org/sondzela

Benka Lifestyle – luxury Country Cottages on Swazi Lizekhar Sport Horses

- 6 beautiful Self-Catering cottages 15km from Rest Camp
- B&B option available; Most cottages sleep 2, some sleep 4
- benka@swazilizekhar.com / +268 – 7910 1101 (WA/Cell)

More B&B's and accommodation in the area:

- Malkerns: Willows B&B www.willowlodgeswaziland.com 76021284
Malandela's B&B www.malandelas.com +268 2528 3448 bookings@malandelas.com
Nyanza Cottage info@nyanza.co.sz +268 7608 5779
- Ezulwini: Buhleni Self Catering Cottages info@buhlenifarm.co.sz +268 2416 3508
Mantenga Lodge reservations@mantengalodge.com +268 2416 1049
Happy Valley Hotel +268 2416 1199/1898 reservations@happyvalleyhotel.com
Royal Villas Tel: +268 7690 3524 / +268 2416 2042 reservations@royalvillas.co.sz
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