

Greetings all,

Much has happened, as seems most of the times, between now and the last newsletter.

[Glamping Sandat](#) is now open to the public and has got rave reviews from guests, and also in the media. The UK Independent News says “It claims to be the island's first luxury camping experience with a choice of five canvas tents, propped up on local bamboo and mahogany frames, plus three split-level huts with thatched roofs and carved Balinese furniture. The overall effect is impressive with immaculate interiors throughout, hugged by tropical gardens, candlelit pathways and an infinity pool”.

The opening of the [Canopy Towers](#) Tent Camp in Panama has been postponed to early next year. This Camp promises to be a very exciting destination for the avid birdwatcher, or someone wanting to visit the unique, and seldom visited part of the Darien Province.



The huge UAE project sustained a big setback when a gust of wind during the night damaged the one roof fly's. All this happening before the canvas bodies could be pinned to the ground, which gives the tents the stability required in windy conditions. At the time of writing the first replacement parts are being flown back to the site for completion of the tent part of the project.



We have so many different questions from clients on a whole slew of subjects but what is common, is that most of them are interested in our tents and would like to do something with them. This newsletter is going to be a first part of taking the client's perspective, in many ways, on how to start up the thought process of owning a tent, and what can possibly go into that process.

#### Choosing a location:

Many clients may already have a property, and others may be seeking to purchase such a property. No matter the situation one will be looking for a suitable location to place the tent/s.

Be the location on the ocean or inland one is always going to look for the finest position/s on the property to place the tents.

Primarily one needs to do an inventory of all the natural assets on the property, (some properties may not have any or only few assets), such as rocks, trees, a hill, stream, gully's, views, ponds etc. to ascertain how to best utilize or integrate these assets into positioning the tent/s.

One will also need to look for shade. If available, this will make the living space cooler and will also partially protect the tent from the climate. Also determine the points of the compass on the property to place the tent/s facing the best direction based on the specific location and climate.

Wind is also a big factor when positioning the tent/s. it is desirable that they are positioned in a way or place that affords them the best protection from wind – that being said, it is not always possible to do this if the parcel of land has no assets to protect the tents. In this case one would have to consider creative landscaping to

achieve this goal. This is also necessary for creating privacy on a property too small to have space to create the privacy needed.

Should the property have very little assets, one must consider how to create some of the natural assets through landscaping, and bring in certain natural materials such as rocks, trees, ponds and screens to name a few. Sandat Glamping used bamboo screens between tents to create the privacy but also planted up a lot of vegetation on either side of the bamboo so that once it has matured, they plan on removing the bamboo, leaving a living natural separation between their tents.



In essence, one has to vision what one wants to create. Be there natural assets on the land, or not to achieve an objective, and always bearing in mind what you or your clients would like to enjoy, and make the stay in the tent more of an experience, than just a habitation.

It is best to draw lines, or lay out string to gain perspective on the overall tent size. If the land is undulating, or on a slope, run lines to gain perspective on the various elevation levels one may be dealing with.

Weather vulnerability, insects, animal's etcetera:

If one has purchased land, or looking into purchasing land, be sure to get as much weather related information as one can. Understanding the historical extremes and variability of weather of the location or general area.

Once the tent/s have been setup, one can develop a plan on how to best deal with those threats. It is not always possible to plan on all the extremes, but it is always best to have an idea on what one may have to deal with in the future.

Lightning may or not be a factor in any specific place. However, if it is a concern, one should put up a lightning deflector, and even the ground the tent frame stands on, if so desired.

Extreme winds are often a huge concern. Strong gusts have been known to cause a lot of damage, and even deaths. It is important to talk to one of our team members to learn how to brace the tents properly. This will help to keep your investment safe.

It is also wise to learn what wild animals, reptiles, amphibians or insects may be present on the property. This will help determine how to keep the tents, and guests safe. It is better to have the knowledge of these creatures than to not have it. Not only is it a way of knowing the existence of such creatures, but can also be a great asset and incorporated into planning. This will also give you an idea on how high the decking will need to be off of the ground to avoid any inference with guests. Hippopotamus come to mind in raising a tent platform, but be rest assured, they are not going to be an issue for most folks and our tents.

Last but not least, is the ever so humble biting insects that can cause a lot of discomfort and or harm to ones guests and family and can cause infection or diseases when bitten. Be sure to make provision for adequate protection,. It is way better than having to deal with the various resultant sicknesses.

### Accessibility:

When purchasing remote land that does not have a road, it is important to carefully think through the best way to use the natural assets. Making a road is quite intrusive on the environment.

Along with weather, cost and how to place the road, will determine the end result. Be aware of flood zones, (weather history) , as well as steep inclines that can cause instant erosion, if not taken into account. Try where possible to remove as little vegetation as possible (not always easy). Most importantly, create the access that it will be durable, last a long time with as little maintenance as possible and to become part of a greater sense of arrival onto the property when completed.

If there are inclines it is best where possible, to try and follow the contours in gradual up and down parts of the road. Always remember when making a road, or disturbing the soil, the first plants that will grow will be the pioneers. Many of which are common weeds that one may need to deal with.



### Utilities and communications:

Again as in the previous point, in most places on earth these days, there seems to be cell phone service everywhere, but that is not always the case when one acquires a remote property. Most folks are used to having electricity, sewerage, phones, TV etc., already established at the doorstep.

When it comes to setting up remotely, and one is off grid, the following are important factors to consider based on your personal or guest requirements: -

- \* Electricity – solar, wind, hydro and generated power (or combo of all available) together with battery storage. Fuel generated power on its own is the most costly, unless driven by readily available natural resource, such as wood.

- \* Communications – telephone, satellite, TV, long distance communications radio and these days the Internet.

- \* Sanitation system - there are a whole variety of options here as well.

\* Water – this essential element may be readily available or challenging to reach but will mostly go along these days with a good filtration and purification system.

\* Water harvesting and storage also needs careful consideration based on water availability and climate.

Mostly all of these utilities (some sanitation systems can be excluded) will all require power in one way or another.

Be your location on the grid or off, the draw of power is usually one of the most expensive items that will vary from country to country, depending on the amount of power one consumes on a daily basis.

Not all power options can stand alone,. For example, solar only works best when the sun shines, as does hydro when the water runs, so as a result the best is to combine as many of the options as the budget and location will allow.

Tall-forested areas will mostly not be conducive to wind or solar power generation without considerable, and costly effort, as we have found out.

Always look for appliances that use the least amount of power, and avoid where possible, those items consuming a great deal of power. A lot will come down to what one can and cannot afford.

Design of deck and tent - over engineering and longevity:

Choosing a tent is challenging, as there are limiting factors to consider such as space available on the property, living space desired and is practical, budget, what design will fit in with the theme being created, and what will best meet ones needs. This is a personal choice, as we have much to choose from. Serengeti Tents are the smaller of our range but quite popular but more commonly selected are the tents that range from 40-70 sqm (roughly speaking 400-700 sq ft). Leaving enough space to create a luxury environment. Luxury in itself can mean space, and together with simple elegant interiors, one can create this ambiance of luxury under canvas. Remember that most our tents can be custom designed to meet our clients requirement, in one-way or another.

**Not only do** we strive to be leaders in tent design innovation, **we also** produce the best quality tents ever made. A tent brings us closer to our primordial selves in a way that no other structure can do and ultimately enhances the experience of living in luxury at the same time.

This deck component can be the easiest or most contentious, as everyone has their own ideas and a creative side. Also some folks may bring in an architect into the mix, who will be able to make things more interesting, and at times more costly. Be reminded that in many instances the deck or platform supporting the tent may turn out more costly than the tent itself. The platform can also be made of concrete, a mix of stone, brick, and mortar, but at the end of the day, one would like to create a base that is rigid and strong enough to support the tent. We like to suggest that one tries to avoid rectangles and squares, however, this is not always possible due to budget constraints.

One thing we always try to elaborate on, is that the deck is an important “vehicle” that, if well planned, will “marry” the living space of the tent with the natural environment of the surroundings.



There is always a chance of over-engineering a platform. Which we have seen on quite a few occasions. A good rule of thumb is to make a structure that is rigid enough and will support the tent in tough conditions, this is all that is required. As mentioned earlier on two occasions, one wants to marry the tent with the natural assets as much as possible, and this is where a free-form design that incorporates these natural components, come into play with the deck and how to shape it. If one has more than one tent, try to create a unique design for each tent based on the natural assets, existing or brought in, and in so doing making each living space a unique feature from each other.

Obviously if one can budget for it, a splash pool of some sorts that mixes with the design is always a plus, and will add to the ambiance.

At the end of the day, it is most important to create a beautiful deck, or plinth that will endure the test of time, and serves its purpose in the numerous ways mentioned.

In closing on this point, if one does not limit one's mind or vision, one can go a long way with very little to create a very unique living environment under your canvas.

**Positioning of tent/structures:**

This part of the process is probably the most fun. Now one is able to interact on the property with a particular space, and the environment, to find the balance between your vision for the tent placement and what is best to protect and incorporate the natural assets that have been identified.

It is important to get it right the first time, as one does not want to disturb the ground or the vegetation unnecessarily.

This is also the time one needs to be really flexible with the ability to make changes at any moment. It is better to find the best position and to avoid taking out a bush,

trees or even rocks. Any design may be perfect on paper but when it comes to the actual situation on the ground, and based on the latter natural assets and topography, change may need to occur. This may most likely not be the case on flat land with few natural assets, but it must still be kept in mind if one is going to introduce any significant landscaping after the fact.

Position of the sun during winter and summer, along with obvious views and consideration for privacy, are also critical ingredients to take into consideration for the perfect positioning of one or more tents.

It is better to change a bit on the substructure to accommodate, or incorporate these natural assets than to move them. One thing to be certain to do if one is in a wooded location, is to get a good botanist to identify all the trees in the surrounding area to find out if there are any poisonous species growing close to the tents that could cause harm to oneself or ones guests, and removed them if appropriate.

It is also good to find out if any of the trees bear excessive fruit loads, such as many wild fig species, as one does not want to position a tent under such a tree for a variety of good reasons. The same will apply to any tree bearing fruit that will stain, mulberry etc., or bears excessively large or heavy fruit, as these can damage the tent as well as cause bodily harm to a person.



If one is setting up in an area that has mosquitoes, look for any depressions that will collect water. Be sure to fill in these depressions or open them that they drain to prevent the mosquitoes from breeding onsite.

To be continued in the next newsletter.

Take care

From us all at Exclusive Tents