

Zimbabwe

THE BEST OF ZIMBABWE

- A privately guided safari incorporating the Victoria Falls, Hwange and Matobo National Parks
- Highly personal trip hosted throughout by an experienced, local safari guide
- Excellent game viewing, fantastic birding and a spectacular variety of landscapes
- Slow-paced travel, based in comfortable lodges which fully showcase the various regions visited
- All game viewing activities and guided tour of the Victoria Falls



Summary

This expert led journey encompasses the mighty Victoria Falls, one of the seven natural wonders of the world; Hwange National Park, the largest game reserve in Zimbabwe, covering an area of over 14'000 square kilometres and finally; the spectacular rocky granite topography of the Matopo Hills, a region which truly captures the awe-inspiring expanse of untamed Africa. With an opportunity of seeing a wide range of wildlife, from hippopotamus and crocodile to elephant and black rhinoceros, this trip will also provide you with fabulous birding and an opportunity of seeing some of Africa's most beautiful wilderness regions.

Overview



Zimbabwe is one of Africa's great safari destinations for wildlife and scenic beauty and has many attractions, including the World Heritage Site of the Victoria Falls, Hwange National Park and the Matobo National Park. Explore these regions on a privately guided journey with departure dates and trip extensions to suit.



Hosted throughout by a professional guide, you will be accompanied throughout your journey, from the time you arrive in Victoria Falls to the time you depart from Bulawayo.

Your experts



As with all of our tours, choosing the right guide makes the difference between a good trip and an excellent one and this is no exception.



Throughout your time in Zimbabwe, you will be hosted by John Nicholson, a professional guide who has been involved in the tourism industry for over 20 years. John has led safaris throughout Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana, combining an encyclopedic knowledge of wildlife with an enormous amount of enthusiasm and humour. When asked what it was about this particular journey that inspired him, John replied 'because I personally love spending time in these places'. John lives in Victoria Falls town with his family.

Itinerary



Day 1

Following your arrival in Victoria Falls, you will be welcomed by your guide and transferred to your hotel where you will stay for the following three nights. After settling in, spend a relaxing afternoon enjoying the uninterrupted views of unspoilt bushveld from the lodge, keeping a watchful eye on the waterhole – the perfect spot for the first spectacular African sunset of the trip!

This evening you will meet your guide for an informal discussion about your safari with an opportunity to find out about the optional (extra) activities available during your stay in Victoria Falls such as helicopter flights and elephant rides.

Stay overnight at Victoria Falls Safari Lodge on a bed & breakfast basis.



Day 2

This morning, after breakfast, you will be collected from your hotel for a guided tour of the falls. The Victoria Falls is one of the seven natural wonders of the world and is arguably the greatest waterfall in the world. The guided tour will last approximately one and a half hours and will include a short brief and introduction of the falls, followed by a walk along the paths, stopping at the numerous viewpoints.

The rest of the day is at leisure to relax at the hotel with its uninterrupted views of the bush and nearby waterhole or to enjoy a variety of optional extra activities that are on offer.

Stay overnight at Victoria Falls Safari Lodge on a bed & breakfast basis, including dinner.



Day 3

A full day at leisure to enjoy the numerous optional (extra) activities on offer such as a sunset cruise on the Zambezi River.

The Zambezi River is the fourth largest in Africa after the Nile, Zaire and Niger respectively. The sunset cruises (which last for approximately two hours) follow a journey upstream, with riverine vegetation which includes the Mulala Palm - a tall attractive palm tree that produces a vegetable ivory fruit that grows to the size of a cricket ball – and fantastic bird life, not to mention the hippopotamus and occasional crocodile. In the drier months, wildlife such as elephant and antelope can be seen grazing on the riverbanks or swimming across to the smaller islands.

Stay overnight at Victoria Falls Safari Lodge on a bed & breakfast basis, including dinner.





Day 4

After breakfast you will depart for Hwange National Park, which is approximately 200km's (an estimated three hour drive on paved roads) from Victoria Falls. En-route you will pass rural Zimbabwe: African villages, schools and pastoral scenes.

On arrival at the entrance to Hwange National Park you will be transferred to Somalisa Camp. Somalisa is situated in the heart of Hwange and is situated approximately 50km's from the entrance gate. The game drive to the camp will take approximately two hours, depending on what wildlife is seen en-route.



On arrival at Somalisa and after checking in, you will enjoy lunch, followed by an afternoon game activity. Activities during your stay include morning and afternoon game drives, evening night drives and walking safaris with an armed guide. The park contains large numbers of elephant, kudu, giraffe and sable and roan antelope, so you will need your binoculars and cameras at the ready.



Stay overnight at Somalisa Camp on a fully inclusive basis.

Days 5 – 6

Enjoy early morning and afternoon game viewing activities during your stay in Hwange National Park.



Stay overnight at Somalisa Camp on a fully inclusive basis.

Days 7 - 8

Today you will have an early start, taking a packed breakfast with you as you return to the entrance to Hwange National Park and then on to the Matopa Hills, travelling via Bulawayo. The approximate distance of today's journey will be around 250km's which should take about three hours.



On arrival at camp, you will enjoy lunch followed by an afternoon activity. Mammal and bird species are prolific in this region and include leopard and black eagle as well as a healthy population of black rhinoceros. Activities during your stay will include game drives, game walks, as well as visits to the famous tomb of Cecil John Rhodes, Bushman paintings and caves. Alternatively, relax at the camp's specially designed rock pool which overlooks the waterhole. There is also an opportunity to visit an African homestead where you will be able to meet the local Matabele people and visit the school which is sponsored by the camp.

Stay overnight at Camp Amalinda on a fully inclusive basis.

Day 9

This morning, after enjoying breakfast, you will be transferred to Bulawayo International Airport for your onward flight.

Accommodation:
Victoria Falls Safari Lodge



Set high on a plateau which forms a natural boundary to the Zambezi National Park, the lodge enjoys uninterrupted views of unspoilt bushveld, spectacular African sunsets and the on-site waterhole. The lodge is 4km away from Victoria Falls Rainforest and 3km away from the town centre. The standard twin rooms are all air

conditioned and the rooms' front walls have wooden concertina shutters and glass doors which unfold onto a private balcony with a view overlooking the National Park and facing the sunset. All rooms have an en-suite bathroom and separate shower, mosquito nets and mosquito pads, hairdryers and tea/coffee making facilities. There are two restaurants, Makuwa-Kuwa Restaurant within the lodge and the world-renowned Boma Restaurant which is 500m from the lodge. There is an open plan bar with its own game-viewing platform overlooking the waterhole. The lodge has a swimming pool with sun deck. A complimentary shuttle service transports guests to the town centre on an hourly basis throughout the day.

Somalisa Camp



Somalisa is an authentic bush camp set in the heart of Hwange National Park, which provides a blend of old African charm and elegance together with an exclusive safari experience. Only six elegantly furnished canvas tents with en suite bathrooms, flush toilet and romantic alfresco bush showers make up this camp. Its stunning

location tucked away on an acacia island along the edge of an ancient seasonal flood plain gives it breathtaking views of the savannah plains of the famous Kennedy Vlei line.

Camp Amalinda

Tucked away into an ancient Bushman's shelter, Camp Amalinda's charm will leave an indelible impression on even the most intrepid traveller. The granite domes and castle kopjes of the Matobo Hills echo the essence of tranquility and the majesty of untamed Africa. Mammal and bird species are prolific and include the highest concentration of leopard and Black Eagle in the world, as well as a healthy population of endangered Black Rhino. Activities include game viewing by vehicle, on foot and horseback, visits to the famous tomb of Cecil John Rhodes, hiking to Bushman paintings and caves and tours to a traditional African homesteads. Amalinda remains one of the last few owner-run safari lodges in Zimbabwe.



Dates

DATES

This journey is available on request, throughout the year

Main tour cost

From £3'415 per person in twin share room throughout *excluding all international flights*

Based on a minimum number of two and a maximum number of ten

Includes

All road transfers conducted in an air-conditioned vehicle

Guided Tour of the Victoria Falls (including entrance fee)

Services of a Private Guide/Tour Leader

Victoria Falls Safari Lodge: 3 night's accommodation on a bed & breakfast basis

Somalisa Bush Camp: 3 night's accommodation on a fully inclusive basis, all scheduled activities, local drinks,

National Park fees

Camp Amalinda: 2 night's accommodation on a fully inclusive basis, all scheduled activities, local drinks,

National Park fees

Excludes

All flights

Visa and visa fees

Airport and departure taxes

Travel insurance

All items of a personal nature

Gratuities

Any extra curricular activities

Meals and drinks other than those stated

Flights

We are happy to book the necessary flights for you, based on your specific dates of travel. Please contact us for a costing.



Important information

Travelling from outside the UK

We are happy to quote you either in US dollars or Euros, or for the tour including flights. However, owing to currency fluctuations, we will quote you at the time of your enquiry using the current exchange rate and base this on current flight availability. Please do contact us for a costing.

Vaccinations

We recommend inoculations for: Typhoid, Tetanus and Hepatitis A. If you are a regular traveller abroad we recommend that you are up to date on all childhood inoculations and vaccinations including polio. Malaria is endemic in Zimbabwe and expert advice is therefore essential. Please consult a medical practitioner or call MASTA on 09068 224100 (premium rate call) at least one month before you travel.

Visas

All visitors must be in possession of a valid passport with at least six months left before expiry. UK single entry visas, payable in cash on arrival: Single Entry: US\$55, Double Entry: US\$70, EU single entry visas, payable in cash on arrival: Single Entry: US\$35, Double Entry: US\$55.

Health and Fitness

A reasonable level of fitness will allow you to fully appreciate this safari and the small amount of walking involved. We also suggest taking a small personal medical kit.

Essential items that you will need

You should take sun block, strong sunglasses and a wide brimmed hat. When walking wear colours that blend with the scenery. Long trousers or combat trousers (not jeans) give protection against thorns and do not leave you cold when wet. Good footwear is essential as is a lightweight waterproof jacket in neutral colours. A light jacket or sweatshirt for early mornings, as well as a good pair of binoculars and a camera also recommended. On receipt of a booking form and deposit we do send out a very detailed trip dossier including an in-depth list of recommended equipment.

Weather

This programme has been designed to run over a full year, and includes all the contrasts of weather that are encountered, from winter though to summer.

Our commitment



In 2007 we celebrated 10 years of spectacular achievement as pioneers in the field of nature travel.

We have raised significant funds in support of the world's leading wildlife and conservation agencies, researchers and experts, and we have increased awareness of travel and conservation through newsletters, lectures and consistent media coverage. Furthermore we have voluntarily spearheaded collective action campaigns such as Travel Operators for Tigers in South Asia.



To mitigate the carbon dioxide released into the high atmosphere through your air travel we are giving £10 per client to Rainforest Concern. Rainforests have a central role to play in the slowing of climate change and yet we are removing forests from the planet at a faster rate than they can grow back. It is thus axiomatic to try and preserve the forests that we have rather than replanting.

Rainforest Concern was established in 1993 to protect threatened natural habitats, the biodiversity they contain and the indigenous people who still depend on them for their survival.

Our travel partners, accommodation, service providers and ground agents are all carefully chosen for their commitment to the environment, with most of them being quality, family-owned businesses. They all reflect the unique character of the places, the abiding hospitality of the people and the remarkable spirit of the wilderness.

Now come along and see for yourself. With us it won't cost the earth!

Want to discuss this trip?

Please call **Mandy** on **01285 643333** for more details or to make a booking



Born and raised in South Africa, Mandy's passion for the African bush and its people began at a private game reserve adjacent to the Kruger National Park. This led to far dustier and wilder experiences further afield in Botswana, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia. Considering herself privileged to have witnessed raw Africa at its finest – from nesting leatherback turtles and endangered mountain gorillas to the simple beauty of everyday life in the bush – Mandy is passionate about the conservation of Africa and its wildlife.