

DETAILED ITINERARY for ZAMBIA & ZIMBABWE SAFARI

Summary:

Join South African native and Africa Specialist, Nadia Eckhardt, on this specially designed Zambia and Zimbabwe safari. Venture off the beaten path with a small group to experience a classic, authentic safari through this untamed wilderness. Explore Kafue National Park, one of the largest parks in Africa and the only place cheetah is found in Zambia, continue to South Luangwa, the birthplace of the walking safari, then head to the Lower Zambezi National Park for a combination of land and water activities. At Victoria Falls, view this impressive site and do a bit of shopping for local crafts, before ending in Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park with its large lion prides and rare wild dog.

Day 1: Lusaka, Zambia □

Arrive Lusaka and receive an inclusive transfer from the airport to a city area hotel. Spend overnight (not included in trip rate, but will be booked together as a group) in Lusaka. This is a good opportunity to rest up before flying out to your first Zambian National Park the next morning. □

Overnight at Taj Pamodzi Hotel or similar

Day 2: Kafue National Park □

Zambia is a large landlocked country with the high peaks of the Nyika Plateau on the eastern border, the mineral rich corridor known as the Copper Belt along the northwestern part of the country, and the mighty Zambezi River which winds itself through western Zambia to form its southern boundary. Lusaka is the commercial capital and tourism thrives in Livingstone at the Victoria Falls, but Zambia's best kept secrets are the remote, Kafue, Luangwa and Lower Zambezi National Parks, which offer exceptional safari experiences, particularly walking safaris. □ □ Today, fly by shared charter from Lusaka, Zambia to Kafue National Park. Thanks to the rising mist off the floodplains as they dry up in winter, guests can experience incredible sunrises and sunsets, with the sun a spectacular pink color, while the floodplains and dambos teem with wildlife and birds; the plains provide some of the best lion viewing in Africa. □

Overnight at Shumba Camp

Days 3-4: Kafue National Park □

Spend two full days in Kafue National Park, one of the largest National Parks in Africa. It is fed by three rivers, the Lufupa in the northwest and the

Lunga and Kafue in the northeast. The Lufupa River floods in the summer, creating a large floodplain delta system that attracts thousands of waterbirds. The Lunga and Kafue rivers are wide and slow-flowing, banded by riverine forest. In the extreme north of the Kafue lie the Busanga Plains, one of Zambia's most significant wetland resources and one of the few areas in the world that remain untouched by development and human activity.

□□The Park has the largest mammal species diversity in Zambia due to its interesting habitat mix which includes miombo woodland and seasonal open grassy areas called dambos. The Park boasts 55 large mammal species, including 20 ungulate and six cat species! Other unusual sightings include leopard, porcupine, water mongoose and side-striped jackal. The birdlife is thrilling in its diversity and numbers with nearly 500 species recorded. Activities include game drives, walking safaris and night drives, led by qualified guides who are extremely knowledgeable about the area and its wildlife. □

Overnight at Shumba Camp

Day 5: South Luangwa National Park□

Board a shared charter flight from Kafue National Park to South Luangwa National Park. South Luangwa National Park covers about 3,495 square miles of the Luangwa Valley floor, which varies from about 500 to 800 meters above sea level. Near the banks of the Luangwa the land is fairly flat, and mostly covered with mature woodlands. There are areas of dense vegetation where bushbuck and leopard thrive and a number of large clearings that were once part of the mighty Luangwa River but were cut off, forming alluvium-filled oxbow lakes. Sausage trees with their pendulous fruit are often filled with the shrieks of Lilian's Lovebirds or Grey-headed Parrots, adding surreal character to these clearings, while towering Ilala Palms highlight the backdrop of riparian forest. □□One of the most entertaining residents of this area is the hippopotamus that's found here in numbers unequalled anywhere else in the world. It regularly serenades guests to sleep with its repertoire of grunts, laughs and unintelligible croaks. Crocodiles too are commonly seen sunning themselves on the broad sandy banks of the Luangwa. The birdlife is spectacular with numerous conspicuous species such as Saddle-billed, Open-billed and Yellow-billed Storks, African Fish-eagles and Bee-eaters being almost guaranteed.

□ *Overnight at Puku Ridge Tented Camp*

Days 6-7: South Luangwa National Park□

Spend two full days in South Luangwa National Park. South Luangwa is

renowned as the best walking destination in Africa and guests have the choice to explore the Luangwa riverine vegetation and adjacent dambos on guided walks. Other activities include day and night wildlife-viewing drives.
□ *Overnight at Puku Ridge Tented Camp*

Day 8: Lower Zambezi National Park □

Fly from South Luangwa National Park on a shared charter to Lower Zambezi National Park. The wildlife of the Lower Zambezi National Park is entangled between the escarpment and the river, which makes for excellent game viewing. Enjoy bush walks, river safaris, canoeing, game drives and fishing, all hosted by highly acclaimed Africa-born guides. □
Overnight at Chiawa Camp

Days 9-10: Lower Zambezi National Park □

Enjoy two full days of game viewing and safari activities (walking, canoeing, boating and game drives) in the Lower Zambezi. Situated on the banks of the Zambezi River in the southeastern part of Zambia, opposite Zimbabwe's Mana Pools National Park, Lower Zambezi National Park's distinguishing features are the rugged escarpment to the north, the river itself, and its numerous islands, lagoons and floodplains which attract most of the wildlife. There are approximately 50 mammal species and 400 bird species, which thrive in the Park, as well as a wide variety of spectacular trees, grasses and flowers. □ □ This area is still unspoiled as it is new to tourism and is afforded a high level of protection from the Zambian Government and the local tour operators. It was only declared a National Park in 1983, and the Cumings Family, who own and operate Chiawa Camp, brought the first tourists to the Park in 1990. Visitors to the Park are thus assured of seeing very little human activity. This has led to the Lower Zambezi National Park providing one of Africa's finest wilderness experiences. The legendary Zambezi River is in itself a spectacle and is the namesake of this pristine wilderness as one of the most diverse and interesting eco-systems on the planet. □

Overnight at Chiawa Camp

Day 11: Victoria Falls □

Fly on a shared charter flight from the Lower Zambezi to Victoria Falls. The town of Victoria Falls is set on the southern bank of the Zambezi River, at the western end of the Victoria Falls themselves. The settlement began in 1901 when the possibility of using the waterfall for hydro-electric power was explored. The town then expanded as the railway line reached the Falls,

shortly before the Victoria Falls Bridge was opened in April 1905, connecting Zimbabwe to what is now Zambia. Victoria Falls is the principal tourism center for the magnificent Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the world. □□The spray from the falls can be seen from 30 miles away, hence the local name “Mosi-oa-Tunya,” which means, “the smoke that thunders.” Lower water levels are experienced from August to mid-January and higher water levels are seen from mid-January to the end of July. Shop at the extensive craft markets, support the local restaurants and bars, or get active with white water rafting, sport fishing and kayaking. Be sure to relax and enjoy unforgettable African sunsets on a Zambezi River cruise. □

Overnight at the Victoria Falls Hotel

Day 12: Hwange National Park□

Fly on a shared charter from Victoria Falls to Hwange National Park and Davison’s Camp. Located on the border with Botswana, Hwange was proclaimed some 75 years ago and has served as a haven for one of the densest concentrations of game in Africa. In particular, its great herds of Cape buffalo and elephant (nearly 30,000) are a sight to see. Hwange has some of the highest mammal diversity for any national park in the world. □□With over 100 species the diversity is incredible: slender mongoose, yellow mongoose, banded mongoose, Selous mongoose, dwarf mongoose, honey badger, black-backed jackal, bat-eared fox, side-striped jackal, lesser bushbaby, vervet monkey, baboon, porcupine, aardwolf, spotted hyaena, caracal, leopard, African wildcat, lion, scrub hare, southern giraffe, hippo, springhare, warthog and Burchell's zebra. Antelope often seen in the area include common duiker, eland, roan antelope, impala, kudu, sable, steenbok, waterbuck and blue wildebeest. White rhino is another special sight to see here. □

Overnight at Davison’s Camp

Days 13-14: Hwange National Park□

Enjoy two full days in Hwange National Park. Activities include open 4x4 Land Rover game drives and guided nature walks throughout the Makalolo concession. The area's large number of waterholes attracts game in both quantity and variety, especially in the winter months when Hwange is literally home to a Noah's Ark parade of animals as they come down to quench their thirst. □□Game viewing is productive year-round in the Linkwasha Concession and wildlife frequently encountered here includes lion, large herds of elephant, buffalo, leopard, white rhino, spotted hyaena, southern giraffe, sable, blue wildebeest, impala, common waterbuck and

reedbuck. There are a number of large, open plains areas which make for excellent game viewing; in summer, wildebeest, zebra and eland are found in abundance here, while in winter the waterholes are magnets around which elephant in enormous numbers congregate to drink. Bird life in the area is prolific (400+) and varied, with species frequenting teak woodlands, as well as those more typical of the drier Kalahari being present.

Overnight at Davison's Camp

Day 15: Return Home □

Depart very early this morning for a flight to Lusaka or to Johannesburg and connect with your British Airways flight home. Depending on flight schedules and connection times, you may be required to overnight in Johannesburg or Lusaka (not included in trip rate). Conclude the journey upon arriving home in the U.S.