



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Tour Notes

Wild Zambia

Tour Duration – 14 Days



Tour Rating

Fitness ●●●●○ | Off the Beaten Track ●●●●● | Culture ●●●○○ | History ●●○○○ | Wildlife ●●●●●

Tour Pace

Busy

Tour Highlights

- ✓ An adventurous but well-balanced tour, ideal for the first time visitor or seasoned traveller.
- ✓ Game viewing - in search of big game, big herds and the unique shoebill stork, in one of Africa's most unspoilt and off-the-beaten-track destinations
- ✓ A tour with strong environmental and conservation message with some community involvement.
- ✓ Game walks, drives and a serious walk through the swamps to find the shoebill.





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Tour Map Wild Zambia



Tour Essentials

- Accommodation:** Mix of chalets, lodges and basic camping (8 nights)
Included Meals: Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary
Group Size: Maximum of 10 – On this tour you may be joined by travellers from companies other than Undiscovered Destinations
- Start Point:** Lilongwe
End Point: Lilongwe
Transport: Safari vehicles
Country Visited: Malawi & Zambia



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Wild Zambia

Witness the raw and untamed beauty of some of Zambia's best kept secrets, where waking to see the sunrise means catching a glimpse of the timid Sitatunga, and where wading through swamp lands means the anticipation of observing the Jurassic looking shoebill stork. This is a truly adventurous tour offering a veritable plethora of big game viewing and the experience of sleeping under the endless African sky. Delving into the wilds of the northern reaches of Zambia, we travel to remote frontiers where few western tourists venture. This is an incredible opportunity to experience true wilderness and Zambia's hidden gems.

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested and on occasions alternative accommodation, of a similar standard to that named below, will be used. This is an adventure safari in areas of true African wilderness so we kindly ask that travellers should be prepared for some rough conditions and some discomfort.

Tour Guide

Our guides are a key strength, chosen for their knowledge of and passion for the areas in which they work. All of our guides are carefully hand-picked, and are not just passing through these countries, but are usually locally born. Unlike some companies it should be noted we do not send a guide or tour leader from Undiscovered Destinations in the UK as we have every confidence in our locally appointed representative who is responsible for operating the tour on our behalf. You will have the same guide throughout your trip and on occasions he will be supported by a local guide / expert to enhance your experience even more.

Itinerary

Day 1: Join the tour in Lilongwe, Malawi - Lodge

Arrive in Lilongwe. On arrival, transfer from the airport to the lodge. This evening, dinner will be served in a restaurant near the lodge, where your guide will give a tour briefing, outlining the adventure that lay ahead. Overnight at Mafumu Lodge. (D)

Day 2: Luambe National Park, Zambia (approx. 10 hours total driving time) – Camping

After an early breakfast depart Lilongwe for our adventure into Zambia. We travel through Mchinji, heading for the north gate of Luambe Park and a community camping site close by. A picnic lunch is enjoyed en route and we expect to arrive at our camp in the late afternoon, with time to relax before dinner and tonight we have our first taste of camping under the African skies. (BLD)

Day 3: North Luangwa National Park (approx. 5-6 hours overall driving time depending on game sightings)

After breaking camp we continue our journey to Zambia's most remote and iconic park, North Luangwa, driving for some three hours through remote rural villages to reach the entrance. Once in the park we will take a two-hour game drive offering one of the finest wilderness experiences in Zambia, if not Africa. The park is noted for its massive herds of buffalo, large prides of lions, along with many other species including Hyena, Cookson's Wildebeest, Bushbuck, Zebra, Warthog, Baboons, Vervet Monkeys and Impala. Elephant and Leopards are also seen but less frequently than in the southern park. Wildebeest, Hartebeest, Reedbuck and Eland are all usually seen. Overnight at Buffalo Camp - en suite chalets. (BLD)





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Day 4: North Luangwa National Park

This morning we undertake a game walk; led by an experienced and qualified guide and supported by experienced game scouts to enable you to gain an authentic insight into wild Africa. All manner of wild and natural phenomenon can be encountered and enjoyed. Return to camp for some leisure time before setting off on a late afternoon sundowner drive. Overnight at Buffalo Camp. (BLD)

Day 5: Kapishya Hot Springs (approx. 5 hours overall driving time)

Depart Buffalo Bush Camp and continue up the escarpment heading for the unique Kapishya hot springs, a natural, hot, sulphur free spring set alongside the banks of the Mansha River. A variety of activities is available including river floats, horseback riding, and bird walks but relaxing in the natural hot mineral water is definitely not to be missed. It is situated on the estate of Shiwa Ngandu (The Africa House) which is rich in history. Overnight camping. (BLD)

Day 6: Kasanka National Park (approx. 8 hours total driving time)

We shall break camp early before setting off on a two-hour drive to Mpika, stopping for supplies before continuing on to our overnight destination of Kasanka National Park This is a valuable conservation area with a wealth of flora and fauna including many endangered species and exceptional birdlife. Kasanka offers species like the rare sitatunga, sable antelope and bushpigs. Elephants, hippos and buffalo are usually in evidence and the park is increasingly clear of grass and ideal for walking. The rivers are all perennial so there's always water for the animals to thrive. The campsite has a simple pit toilet, shower and shelter but staff will be on hand to assist with hot water for showers. Overnight camping. (BLD)

Day 7: Kasanka National Park

Today we explore this delightful area. We recommend an early morning walk onto the flood plain in front of the campsite where Sitatunga are often seen, then visit one of the hides overlooking the lake and swamps. Game drives are done in our own vehicles that have been specially modified for optimum game viewing with pop up roofs and large windows. Overnight camping. (BLD)

Day 8: Bangweulu Wetlands (approx. 8 hours overall total driving time)

We break camp and depart early today, passing the junction to the David Livingstone tree where he died and his heart was buried, before his body was carried to Dar as Salaam and subsequently shipped to England. Expect a fairly rough, but interesting journey north to The Bangweulu wetlands. This is one of Africa's most spectacular wildlife secrets. It boasts over 100,000 Black Lechwe and the world's most visible Shoebill storks. When the Bangweulu swamp dries up, bird watching is mostly done on foot around the remaining shrinking pools. Game drives are spectacular amongst the big herds of black Lechwe and black winged pratincole, both attractive species found in the Bangweulu. The area supports an incredible diversity of water and plains-birds as well as species such as Elephant, Buffalo, Tsessebe, Reedbuck, Oribi and Sitatunga. Tonight, we shall camp on the entrance to the flood plain. (BLD)

Day 9: Bangweulu Wetlands

Today we have a full day to explore this unique area. Firstly, we drive and then walk through the swamp in attempt to see the somewhat Jurassic looking shoebill stork. In the spirit of this adventure, be prepared to wade through the swamp lands. Although sightings of the shoebill cannot be guaranteed, our chances are good and the walk itself is a fabulous African experience. Depending on our success, we return at lunchtime, and the afternoon will be a leisurely opportunity to experience the vast herds of Black Lechwe on the open plains. Overnight camping. (BLD)

Day 10: Mutinondo Wilderness (approx. 7 hours overall driving time)

This morning we depart the swamps and head back to the main "great north road" and our overnight camp - Mutinondo - 10,000 hectares of privately owned land encompassing pristine Miombo woodland, massive chunks of granite inselbergs, crystal clear rivers to swim in and picturesque waterfalls and glades (dambos).



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We aim to arrive by mid-afternoon so we have time to explore on foot in the beautiful late afternoon sunlight. The campsite is set on the edge of a wooded rocky outcrop with cooking areas, pit latrines and nice hot showers. Here we will be camping with our cook preparing all our camp meals. (BLD)

Day 11: Mutinondo Wilderness

Today is a full day to explore and enjoy this area. Walking trails are demarcated and trails are graded, depending on individual's capacity. Another option is horse riding - subject to availability. Overnight camping. (BLD)

Day 12: South Luangwa National Park

Today we have a 5 hour drive down the escarpment into Luangwa Valley, and then continuing to the northern entrance gate of South Luangwa Park. From there we drive through the park for approximately another 4 hours, along the 05, to the Mfuwe Area. We expect to arrive at Mfuwe by late afternoon. Overnight lodge accommodation. (BLD)

Day 13: South Luangwa National Park

Enjoy two spectacular game drives today, one early in the morning and the other in the afternoon/evening in open game viewing safari vehicles with a Luangwa qualified guide with intimate knowledge of the spectacular biodiversity which can be viewed in this magnificent wilderness. Overnight lodge accommodation. (BLD)

Day 14: Lilongwe - Tour ends

Transfer you back to Lilongwe where the tour will end with a transfer to the airport for an evening flight. Alternatively, you may wish to extend your stay add on a lake break on beautiful Lake Malawi. (B)

Tour Inclusions/Exclusions

Inclusions:

Arrival and departure transfers
All accommodation and camping equipment
Transport in private custom-made safari vehicles
Services of an English-speaking guide and camp chef
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)

Excluded:

International flights
Items of a personal nature
Any airport taxes
Local Payment used for Game park fees of US Dollars \$399 per person
Travel Insurance
Visas
Drinks
Tips (discretionary)



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Important Information

Foreign Office Travel Warnings

Before booking your tour please familiarise yourself with the country specific information provided by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) - <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>. This includes important information such as latest immigration requirements, and details of any travel advisories.

At the time of writing the FCDO does not have any warnings in place against travel to Malawi or Zambia.

Non-UK nationals should check with their own government, as the information and advice may differ to that provided by British authorities.

Accommodation and Meals

Hotel Check-in Times

As a general rule most hotels and lodges will allow guests to check-in from 2pm. Please note that the price of your tour does not include guaranteed early check-in. Therefore please advise us if you would like to ensure that your room is available for an earlier arrival. This is particularly relevant on the first day of the tour and for early morning arrivals. One option is to pre-book and pay for an extra night at the beginning of your tour which will guarantee your accommodation is available irrespective of what time you arrive. Please contact us for information and costs.

It should also be noted that on many of our tours we have set-aside Day 1 of the itinerary as an 'arrival day'. For this reason and because tour participants are likely to be arriving at different times, and often from different countries, guided sightseeing or other activities are not included. If you are arriving early or before the start date of the tour and would like to organise some extra arrangements on a private basis please contact us.

Accommodation Rating

This tour involves 8 nights of camping in dome tents with foam mattress, sleeping bags and a small pillow provided. You may wish to bring your own inner sheet. The other 5 nights consist of lodges/chalets where you can enjoy some comfort with private bathrooms.

We welcome solo travellers and single rooms will be allocated subject to the applicable tour supplement. Please note that on occasions you may not always be allocated a double or twin room, as some hotels have designated single rooms. These may be smaller in size. However, the supplement payable takes this into consideration.

Food & Drinks

The daily meal basis is shown in the tour itinerary; breakfast (B), lunch (L) and dinner (D). Please note that lunch may be a picnic. Drinks are not included and will be payable locally in cash.

Dietary Requirements

If you have any special dietary requirements you must notify us at the time of booking. While we will make every effort to cater for you, and will let you know if there is a problem with a particular diet.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.



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Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Malawi

Lunch £ 7.00 / Dinner £ 12.00

Zambia

Lunch £8.00 / Dinner £ 15.00

Drinks

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Malawi / Zambia

Bottle of Beer £1.50

Water on tour

Please kindly bring a reusable water bottle which will be refilled daily by our local team.

Tipping – Guide and Drivers

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 100 for tipping.

Foreign Exchange

Malawi

ATM Availability: Available Lilongwe but only limited amounts of local currency can be withdrawn at one time

Credit and Debit Card Acceptance: Very few places outside main cities will accept cards

Local Currency: Malawi Kwacha

Recommended Currency for Exchange: We recommend taking your money in US\$ cash (only accept post 2006 US\$ notes). Avoid the lower and higher (US\$1, 5 & 100) denomination notes, as they are difficult to change. Please note that it is difficult to convert local currency back to US\$'s so please ask your guide for guidelines on how much to exchange

Where to Exchange: Your guide will advise you

Zambia

ATM Availability: In the cities and larger towns, the larger banks have ATMs

Credit and Debit Card Acceptance: Cards have limited use in Zambia, and incur a 5% bank charge

Local Currency: Zambian Kwacha

Recommended Currency for Exchange: We recommend taking your money in US\$ cash (only accept post 2006 US\$ notes). Avoid the lower and higher (US\$1, 5 & 100) denomination notes, as they are difficult to change. Please note that it is difficult to convert local currency back to US\$'s so please ask your guide for guidelines on how much to exchange

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Joining your Tour

Flight Information

Our advertised prices do not include the cost of international flights. Please contact us if you would like a quotation to book a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Joining your Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a free airport transfer, both on arrival and departure. In order that the transfer can be arranged please ensure that you advise us of your flight information once available. Please advise the date, time and flight number for your arrival/departure. If we have not been advised of this information at least 2 weeks before travel, then you will be required to make your own way to the hotel on Day 1 of your tour. Please meet your guide in the bar/restaurant area of the Mafumu Lodge at 18:00.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Undiscovered Destinations that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country and be valid for the entire duration of your holiday.

Visa Information

Malawi

Most nationals will require a visa for travel to Malawi. Please note that on this tour a double entry or multiple entry visa is required. When possible it is recommended that you obtain your visa before travel. Electronic visa application – apply online to save time <https://evisa.gov.mw/> Alternatively most nationals can obtain a visa on arrival, although pre-authorization may be required. For further details please visit www.immigration.gov.mw/visa.html.

Zambia

Most nationals will require a visa for travel to Zambia. When possible it is recommended that you obtain your visa before travel, but visas are issued at the point of entry upon payment of the \$ 50 fee. For further details please visit <http://evisa.zambiaimmigration.gov.zm>.

Please be aware that visa information is subject to change, therefore please refer to your nearest embassy or consulate for up-to-date advice. Please note that the price of your tour does not include visa costs.

Passports

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, valid for at least six months after the date of return to your country.

We strongly advise that your passport contains a minimum of two blank pages, as this may be a requirement of the local immigration authorities. In addition, certain countries will stipulate that the two blank pages are opposite each other. If you are unable to meet these requirements you may be refused boarding by your airline or denied entry by the immigration authorities.

For specific information about the requirements for your destination please check with the country's embassy or consulate. Alternatively, UK citizens can visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.



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Vaccinations & Protection

Malawi

We strongly recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, and polio. Malaria is present in the region so consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Yellow Fever: Please note you will need a Yellow Fever Certificate for border crossings between Zambia and Malawi. Bilharzia: The existence of bilharzia has been reported in certain areas of Lake Malawi. Please be aware that if you choose to swim there may be a risk of contracting bilharzia.

Zambia

Yellow Fever is no longer compulsory for visits to Zambia, however please note that travellers who have previously travelled to or via countries that are endemic to Yellow Fever may be asked to present a Yellow Fever certificate at immigration/borders in Zambia. We strongly recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, and polio.

We strongly recommend that you contact your doctor's surgery or a specialist travel clinic for up-to-date information, advice and the necessary vaccinations.

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in your home country can be different in other countries. If you're travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this guidance from NaTHNaC on best practice when travelling with medicines. For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you'll need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country or territory you're travelling to.

Preparing for your tour

Climate

Malawi

The main rainy season is from January to March. Rain is widespread and generally falls in the form of a thunderstorm in the late afternoon; grass tends to be long and there is more water about so game is more dispersed. Otherwise, it is dry, with low humidity for most of the year. Temperatures reach around 29°C during the day with quite cold nights throughout the year. Early dry season is the most pleasant time for temperatures and the best for bird watching. For game viewing though the late dry season is better.

Zambia

The main rainy season is from January to March. Rain is widespread and generally falls in the form of a thunderstorm in the late afternoon; grass tends to be long and there is more water about so game is more dispersed. Otherwise it is dry, with low humidity for most of the year. Temperatures reach around 29°C during the day with quite cold nights throughout the year. Early dry season is the most pleasant time for temperatures and the best for bird watching, although game viewing though the late dry season is better.

Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight, but a warm sweater and/or fleece jacket is advisable as nights can be cold as Zambia lies on an elevated plateau. Nights at Lake Malawi can also be cold. It can be particularly cold on early morning game drives until the sun has risen. Rainwear is useful in case of an unexpected downpour. A scarf is advisable for dusty drives. Do not wear bright colours whilst game viewing.



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Equipment

Take a torch, water bottle, sunhat and sunblock. Binoculars are a must for bird and wildlife enthusiasts, as is a telephoto lens for keen photographers. Take a swimming costume and towel. Mosquito repellent is necessary and most rooms have nets/screening provided, although you may wish to take some insect repellent.

Footwear

Lightweight trail boots or shoes with good grips for walking safaris plus trainers or sandals for general travelling. For swamp walking to see the shoebills, waterproof shoes or boots are recommended.

Driving

Routes and time estimations are dependent on local road conditions at time of travel. This itinerary has 5 long travelling days. This is very much an adventure safari and we ask travellers to retain a sense of adventure and to display flexibility and patience when we are travelling. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary should conditions require it.

Safari Expectations

On this tour you have the opportunity to see some amazing biodiversity. However, these animals are wild. We cannot guarantee sightings. So please enjoy what nature has to offer and keep expectations realistic.

Luggage on tour

One main piece of luggage (a soft bag or holdall) plus day sack.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg (please note airline allowances may vary)

Electric Supply & Plugs

Malawi - 3 Pin Flat

Zambia - 3 Pin Flat

Tour Itinerary Versions

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes. These tour notes were updated 26th November 2020.