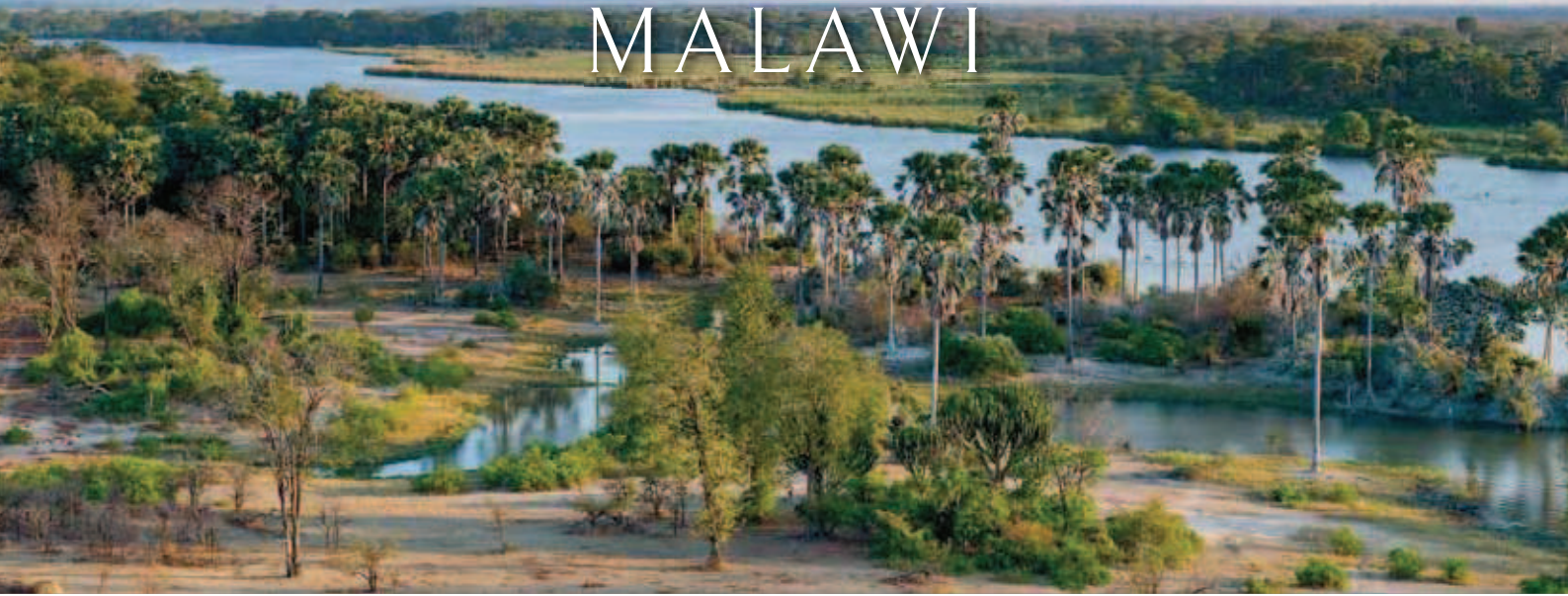


- AN INTRODUCTION TO -
MALAWI



Malawi is a gem of a country in the heart of central southern Africa that offers a true African experience. Lake Malawi, the third largest water body in Africa, takes up almost a third of this narrow country.

Malawi's geography is sculptured by Africa's Great Rift Valley: towering mountains, lush, fertile valley floors and enormous crystal-clear lakes are hallmarks of much of this geological phenomenon – and Malawi displays them all. At its lowest point, the country is only about 35m above sea level; its highest point, Mount Mulanje, is over 3 000m above sea level. Between these altitude extremes, the country's diverse ecology is protected within Malawi's nine national parks and game reserves – everything from elephants to orchids. Malawi is also one of the best places in Africa for visitors to meet and interact with the local inhabitants or visit a rural community in an atmosphere totally devoid of either expectation or affectation.

This is a warm and welcoming country that offers visitors wonderful beauty, fascinating parks and some of the friendliest people in Africa. It is no wonder that it is known as the “warm heart of Africa.”



OUR MALAWI AREAS

Liwonde National Park

Liwonde National Park, covering 548km², is considered the most prolific wildlife area in Malawi. The Shire River – the country’s largest river and Lake Malawi’s only outlet – forms the Park’s western boundary and harbours a dense population of hippo, crocodiles and large numbers of elephant. Extensive floodplains surrounding the Shire sport dense riverine vegetation fringed by numerous borassus palms and baobabs. Antelope such as impala, waterbuck, reedbuck and bushbuck are plentiful along the banks. In the east, relatively dry mopane woodlands are interspersed with candelabra trees, an area favoured by buffalo, yellow baboon and Lichtenstein’s hartebeest. Sable occur at one of the highest densities in Africa and offer fantastic viewing, while one of only two breeding groups of black rhino in Malawi reside in the Park. Nearly 300 bird species occur here, with specials such as Böhm’s Bee-eater, Livingstone’s Flycatcher, Pel’s Fishing-Owl, Lilian’s Lovebird and Brown-breasted Barbet.



Lake Malawi National Park

Lake Malawi is famed for the abundance and diversity of its fish life and holds a greater array of freshwater fish species (over 1 000) than any other lake on Earth and more than all of Europe and North America combined. The majority of these are colourful fish called cichlids (their local name is mbuna) of which the Lake contains more than 400 types, 30% of all known species. Other fish species such as chambo form the primary protein source of the people that live on the lakeshore and beyond. Much of this astounding underwater diversity is protected within the Lake Malawi National Park at Cape Maclear in the southern part of the Lake, the first park in the world set aside for the protection of freshwater fish and a World Heritage Site.



Lake Malawi - Central Lake Shore

At approximately 600km long and up to 80km wide, Lake Malawi constitutes roughly 20% of Malawi’s surface area. It dominates the eastern side of the country and harbours a wide range of underwater habitats. There are also a number of granitic islands dotted across the Lake while on its the shores, fertile soils, lush woodland and baobabs occur amongst numerous fishing villages and mammals such as baboon, vervet monkey, rock hyrax, sun squirrels and hippo are frequently seen. Along the lakeshore, numerous bird species are found, particularly waterbirds. Nearby remnant patches of lowland forest harbour further exciting bird species including Grey-olive Greenbul and Narina Trogon. The central lakeshore is renowned for its golden beaches.



Nyika National Park

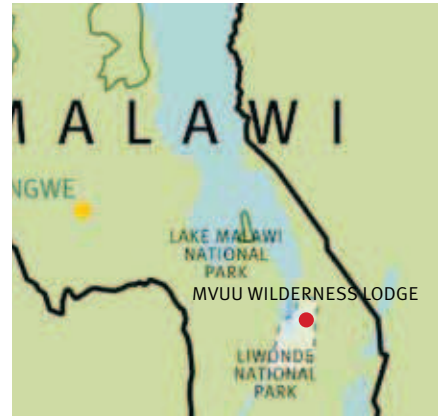
The 3 134km² Nyika National Park, Malawi’s largest park, is a wild, untouched and remote upland area, with the distinction of being the only big game Afro-montane area in south-central Africa. The vistas in this Park are immense with high-altitude grassland the most obvious feature of the Nyika Plateau. Isolated hills and ridges, and evergreen forest pockets bursting with endemism add further character to the rolling hills, whilst extensive swathes of broad-leafed miombo woodland dominate the lower slopes. Nyika is a botanist’s delight in summer with alpine flowers that include 11 localised orchid species, exquisite dieramas, gladioli, protea and kniphofia. Nyika also harbours important populations of roan, eland, Crawshay’s zebra, southern reedbuck, bushbuck, warthog, spotted hyaena and side-striped jackal. Elephant and leopard can be seen at times. Approximately 400 bird species occur in Nyika, many with highly restricted distributions, making it a key birding destination in Africa.





MVUU WILDERNESS LODGE

Wilderness Safaris - Classic Camp



Mvuu Wilderness Lodge overlooks a tranquil lagoon just off the Shire River with the main lounge area set high above the water in an area of captivating variety and beauty. It has an extensive wildlife library and telescope to make the most of the exceptional bird and other life that moves around the river.

Mvuu means “hippo” in Tonga and the name epitomises the large numbers of pods of these water-loving mammals that float in the river. In this lush and fertile area, an excellent diversity of animals can be seen.



Accommodation comprises eight tents, one of which is a romantic honeymoon suite. Each tent has en-suite bathroom facilities and its own deck built to look over the water. Lodge facilities include a dining room, pub, lounge area and a swimming pool.

Activities include boating, walks, birding, and traditional game drives by day and night. No visit to Mvuu is complete without a visit to one of the villages on its boundaries.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES





MVUU CAMP

Wilderness Adventures



Mvuu Camp has a spectacular vantage on the banks of the Shire River that draws all manner of fauna to its banks. The camp, comprising 12 units as well as a nearby campsite, is a clever mix of spacious stone and canvas chalets and specially designed family tents. An impressive thatched dining and lounge area offers a magnificent river vista that is framed by two large baobab trees. Dinners are sometimes held under the stars in a specially constructed boma. A custom-built education and conference centre with facilities for up to 40 delegates or smaller corporate and team building functions is available.



Mvuu Camp offers a wide range of options including camping, as well as full board rates and a variety of activities including boating trips on the Shire River, game drives, nature walks and non-stop birding. Trips to nearby villages and Nanthomba School are also popular.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES





MUMBO ISLAND CAMP

Wilderness Adventures



Mumbo is a pristine island in Lake Malawi National Park which, with its crystal clear waters and innumerable species of cichlid fish, offers some of the best freshwater scuba diving in the world and the best snorkelling on the Lake.

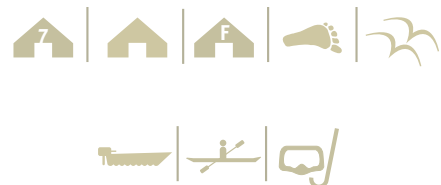
The island lies 10km north-west of Cape Maclear, where reception and the nearest point of road access is located. The camp comprises five twin tents perched on rocks high above the water shaded by lush foliage, each with bucket showers, 'eco-loos' and wooden deck. A hammock provides a comfortable spot to take in the idyllic Lake view. A twin-tented family unit is tucked into the forest near the main beach. There is a dining area, bar and water sport gazebo of timber and thatch.



Activities here vary from lazing in a hammock to snorkelling, diving, swimming, kayaking, and birdwatching. Guests have the option of boating or paddling to explore the granitic islands of the Lake.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES





CHINTHECHE INN

Wilderness Adventures



Chintheche Inn on the western shore of Lake Malawi is known for its white sands, warm clear waters and age-old fishing villages. The area boasts some of the finest beaches on the entire lakeside and the distant Viphya Mountains as a dramatic backdrop.

The Inn is set in lush gardens with large, shady trees overlooking the Lake and comprises ten comfortably furnished en-suite rooms and a two-bedroomed family cottage. All open out onto a patio and grass lawns sloping to the beach and are tastefully furnished with colourful fabrics and local crafts. There is a central dining area and bar, and meals often take place (weather permitting) under the stars or in a shady corner of the garden. There is a large pool, and campsites are discreetly situated in the ample gardens.

Activities include excellent swimming, snorkelling, mountain biking, exciting birding and visits to local fishing villages and the nearby Bandawe Mission.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES




CHELINDA LODGE
Wilderness Safaris - Classic Camp

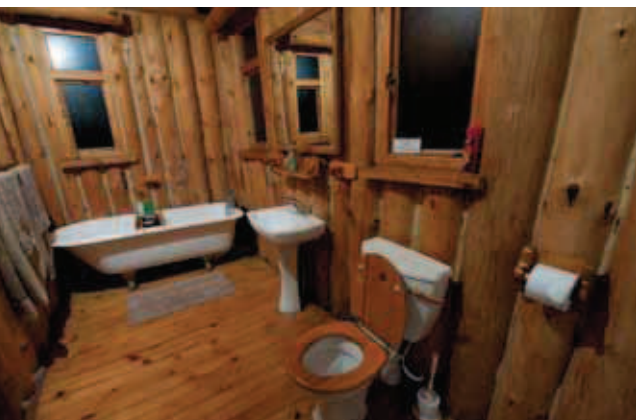


Chelinda Lodge offers spacious log cabins all with sweeping views over Nyika's rolling grasslands, which are often dotted with large herds of roan, eland and zebra. A pocket of hagenia woodland and forest backdrop perfectly shelters this idyllic upland camp.



Accommodation comprises eight warm log cabins made of pine with fireplace, en-suite bathroom and an upstairs viewing area or room for accompanying children. Two chalets are joined to form an interconnected family unit. Elevated wooden walkways link the cabins to the inviting main building, complete with outside deck for sundowners, convivial dining around a fireplace and lounge area for quiet reflection or conversation.

Activities include nature drives to discover the wonders of the Park, informative walks, birding, and mountain biking. Visiting Chelinda Lodge is an exciting component to any visit to Malawi and indeed to the subregion.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES





CHELINDA CAMP

Wilderness Adventures



Chelinda Camp, situated within Nyika National Park, overlooks a crystal-clear dam with views out onto the open grasslands of the High Nyika Plateau.

The camp has two types of accommodation. Four chalets each with two bedrooms, bathrooms, a lounge, dining area with fireplace, and small kitchen are ideal for private groups with their own guide; private meals can be enjoyed in the chalet. Six twin-bedded en-suite rooms with either a bath or shower are also available; guests here take meals in the nearby main area, which has a large dining, bar and lounge area complete with comfortable furnishings and an inviting fireplace.

This unique area is explored via day and night nature drives, walks and mountain biking. The area has a host of birding specials such as Bar-tailed Trogon, White-chested Alethe and Denham's Bustard.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES

