

- AN INTRODUCTION TO -
ZIMBABWE



Two major rivers form the northern and southern boundaries of Zimbabwe: the great Zambezi River cuts along its northern frontier, while the languid Limpopo forms the southern border with South Africa. In between, the country has a variety of habitats, from the granite hills of the Matopos to the majestic mountains, lush forests and beautiful rivers of the Eastern Highlands. As such, there is much to attract the traveller, from wildlife viewing and adrenalin adventures to encountering the history of the Zimbabwean people going back thousands of years.

It is in the unspoilt and peaceful northern parks that we concentrate our safari operations. The Zambezi has an exceptional variety of spectacular scenery as well as one of the world's natural wonders: the Victoria Falls. Downriver, our concession lies in Mana Pools National Park, located on the floodplains of Africa's Great Rift Valley and offering superb wildlife viewing.

Along the Botswana border the easternmost tongues of the Kalahari sands creep into the country and mix with the teak forests of the interior, so that desert-adapted animals share the same habitat with woodland species. Hwange National Park is home to some of southern Africa's last great elephant, buffalo and sable herds. Wilderness' Makalolo and Linkwasha concessions within Hwange are truly wild areas which offer Zimbabwe's best summer game viewing.



OUR ZIMBABWE AREAS

Hwange National Park

Hwange National Park is the largest game reserve in Zimbabwe. Situated on the easternmost edge of the Kalahari Desert, its 1.4 million hectares of sandy soils support extensive stands of broad-leafed woodland that during the summer months, despite the low rainfall, are a profusion of green. Along with salt pans, acacia scrub and grasslands the Park supports an enormous abundance of wildlife. Located on the border with Botswana, the Park was proclaimed some 70 years ago and has one of the densest concentrations of wildlife in Africa, in particular its herds of elephant and buffalo. There are a number of shallow pans spread throughout the Park, around which wildlife congregates, making for excellent game viewing. The private Makalolo and Linkwasha concessions, situated in its south-eastern corner, are ecologically diverse, including vast open palm-fringed plains, grasslands, acacia woodlands and teak forests. This ensures large numbers of animals all year round – elephant, buffalo, sable, roan, giraffe, wildebeest, impala and even gemsbok. These are followed by their predators: lion, leopard, wild dog and cheetah, along with African wildcat, serval, honey badger, civet and spotted hyaena. Of avian interest are species like Dickinson's Kestrel, Bradfield's Hornbill and Arnott's Chat.



Mana Pools National Park

Mana Pools National Park lies at the heart of the Zambezi Valley, where the Zambezi River meanders to the Mozambican border. It is a remote, beautiful place with spectacular views of the broad river, floodplains, riverine woodland and the mountains of the Rift Valley escarpment. This stretch of the Zambezi River is famous for its four main pools (after which the Park is named: 'mana' means 'four' in Shona) – Main, Chine, Long and Chisambuk – which are remnants of channels of the river which stopped flowing years ago. These and smaller seasonal pools dotted further inland hold water all year round, drawing all manner of wildlife and waterfowl during the dry season. The ana trees that characterise the floodplain shed their protein-rich pods during this time, providing vital sustenance for many species, particularly elephant. Wildlife viewing is excellent, with large concentrations of buffalo and elephant along the river's edges, while predators such as lion, wild dog and leopard are often sighted. Kudu, zebra, impala and waterbuck feed on the surrounding plains and the grunting of hippo can be heard all day. Bird life is superb, particularly for both woodland and riverine species with numerous local specials such as Black-throated Wattle-Eye, Red-necked Falcon and Eastern Nicator.





LITTLE MAKALOLO CAMP

Wilderness Safaris - Classic Camp



Little Makalolo lies in one of Hwange National Park's best wildlife viewing areas. It offers privacy for guests who enjoy small camps and a sense of remoteness. The area is ecologically diverse, ensuring great numbers of animals year-round.



The camp's six spacious en-suite tents, with both indoor and outdoor showers, are nestled in the tree line, with solar power for hot water and lighting ensuring a lighter ecological footprint. A false mopane tree in the centre of the camp shades a separate dining and living area as well as a raised platform for views of the much-frequented waterhole. During siesta hours, guests can enjoy outstanding wildlife viewing at the log pile hide that overlooks the waterhole in front of camp. Activities centre on game drives in open 4x4 Land Rovers and guided walks. The area's large number of waterholes attracts game in both quantity and variety, especially in the winter months.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES





MAKALOLO PLAINS CAMP

Wilderness Safaris - Classic Camp



Makalolo Plains is one of the few camps built within Hwange National Park. The camp is built on raised teak decks and boardwalks, providing panoramic views over the Samavundhla Pan and floodplain with its excellent concentrations of wildlife.

Accommodation consists of ten large, comfortable tented rooms with en-suite facilities as well as an outdoor shower for those who enjoy showering under the stars. The raised spacious main area has a lounge, pub, plunge pool and dining area where delicious meals are served.

While the emphasis is on game drives, night drives and guided walks, well-situated hides or raised platforms provide the ideal manner in which to while away the afternoon, watching wildlife come down to the waterholes to drink.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES




DAVISON'S CAMP
Wilderness Adventures



Nestled under a grove of ancient false mopane trees, Davison's Camp is situated in a remote north-eastern corner of Hwange National Park. Named after the founder of Hwange National Park and its first warden, Ted Davison, the camp overlooks an extremely productive waterhole that attracts a variety of plains game and predators. This 18-bedded camp, with its nine twin units and separate main area, comprising a lounge and dining room, offers a wonderful bush experience.



Game activities include game drives in open 4x4 vehicles, or guided walks in the early mornings and evenings, while during the siesta hours, guests can view game coming down to the waterhole to drink from their tent verandas.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES





RUCKOMECHI CAMP

Wilderness Safaris - Classic Camp



Ruckomechi Camp, situated on the western boundary of Mana Pools National Park, accommodates guests in ten spacious en-suite tented units, including a honeymoon suite, all of which overlook the wide Zambezi River. The camp is set amongst broad-canopied ana trees, much loved by the elephants for their rich nutritious seeds. Each tent has both indoor and outdoor showers, and the camp boasts a favourite amongst guests: its outdoor ‘bath-with-a-view’ in a secluded, scenic spot.

The central dining, bar, library and lounge areas face the escarpment and are connected to the rest of the camp by low-level walkways. There is a separate deck with an infinity pool and hammocks for swimming and sun bathing, and an inviting, cushion-strewn star gazing deck. Wildlife viewing takes place in open 4x4 vehicles, on motorised pontoon boats or on canoes, on foot and in hides.



FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES



Wilderness Explorations are an innovative range of fully serviced cross-country mobile safaris that create a secluded sense of wild camping in Africa. These safaris utilise mostly private concessions and wildlife areas exclusive to Wilderness guests, enhancing the range and diversity of activities. Explorations guides are highly trained and noted for their passion and knowledge of their particular countries and lead each journey from start to finish, creating a seamless and detailed interpretive experience. A variety of travel modes such as game drives, walking, mokoro, canoeing, boating and air charters maximise every opportunity to view Africa's diverse flora and fauna. Each itinerary has been carefully created with the changing seasons, game movements and guest experience in mind. All Explorations itineraries have set departure dates, and operate with a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 8 confirmed guests per safari.

Personally crafted Explorations are available on flexible dates and tailored itineraries for private groups or families (4-8 guests).

There are three styles of Explorations, all of which recreate the original "safari" atmosphere of an unhurried journey through Africa. All Explorations feature a mix of transport modes, all aimed at enhancing your experience of the region's wonders.



Discoverer Explorations

Discoverer Explorations are fully serviced luxury mobile safaris, with accommodation alternating between permanent camping sites within private concessions and Wilderness camps, all with superb views. Accommodation in these exclusive camping areas is in specially designed walk-in Meru-style tents with en-suite toilet, shower and basin that allow for greater comfort.



Adventurer Explorations

Adventurer Explorations camps are pitched for the season in operation, mostly in private concessions in prime, shady and scenic sites. These camps have "maxi" dome tents which are surprisingly spacious and sport stretchers and cotton linen. En-suite toilets and generous "bucket" showers are located at the back of each tent. Thanks to easy mobility of these tents, scheduled Explorations (and private safaris) explore the most remote and secret seasonal highlights of the subcontinent.



Trails Explorations

This type of Exploration is the most active and offers the lowest carbon footprint, defined mainly by its unique mode of transport – be it on foot or by canoe. Accommodation varies between Adventurer "maxi" dome tents and Discoverer Meru-style tents as well as sleeping platforms.

