



# BAREFOOT SAFARIS & Adventure Tours

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## TRIP DOSSIER

### Malawi & Zambia: Classic Lodge Safari (LM) (15 DAYS LAND ONLY)

Revised 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012

Malawi is a warm and welcoming country that offers visitors wonderful scenery, fascinating parks and some of the friendliest people in Africa. A long and narrow landlocked country it covers more than 1000 kilometres from north to south while Lake Malawi, nearly 600km long and up to 80km wide, dominates the countryside. There is no country in all of Africa that has its geography so sculptured and determined by Africa's Great Rift Valley, the largest single geographical feature on Earth. This ancient 5 000 km-long geological formation bisects much of Africa from Egypt to Botswana and boasts a bewildering array of habitats and lush vegetation. Towering mountains, lush, fertile valley floors and enormous crystal-clear lakes are hallmarks of much of the Rift Valley - and Malawi displays them all. Fertile soils are a result of the Rift Valley and evidence of this is to be found everywhere in Malawi. Throw a seed to the ground and a plant grows.

The first inhabitants of present-day Malawi were probably related to the San (Bushmen). Between the 1st and 4th cent. A.D., Bantu-speaking peoples migrated to present-day Malawi. A new wave of Bantu-speaking peoples arrived around the 14th century, and they soon coalesced into the Maravi kingdom (late 15th-late 18th century), centered in the Shire River valley. In the 18th cent. the kingdom conquered portions of modern Zimbabwe and Mozambique. However, shortly thereafter it declined as a result of internal rivalries and incursions by the Yao, who sold their Malawi captives as slaves to Arab and Swahili merchants living on the Indian Ocean coast. In the 1840s the region was thrown into further turmoil by the arrival from South Africa of the warlike Ngoni.

In 1859, David Livingstone, the Scots explorer, visited Lake Nyasa and drew European attention to the effects of the slave trade there; in 1873 two Presbyterian missionary societies established bases in the region. Missionary activity, the threat of Portuguese annexation, and the influence of Cecil Rhodes led Great Britain to send a consul to the area in 1883 and to proclaim the Shire Highlands Protectorate in 1889. In 1891 the British Central African Protectorate (known from 1907 until 1964 as Nyasaland), which included most of present-day Malawi, was established. During the 1890s, British forces ended the slave trade in the protectorate. At the same time, Europeans established coffee-growing estates in the Shire region, worked by Africans. In 1915 a small-scale revolt against British rule was easily suppressed, but it was an inspiration to other Africans intent on ending foreign domination.

For those keen on experiencing African culture in all its complexity and beauty, Malawi is definitely the best country for this. Wild and remote, the legendary South Luangwa National Park is sustained by the waters of the Luangwa River, an impressive watercourse that famously supports high densities of game along its banks. The area is perhaps even better known for the role it has played in the development of the walking safari. This journey, rich in contrast and adventure, is full of unforgettable experiences.

**Grading:** *Anyone in good health with a sense of adventure should be able to take part. There's no real physical difficulty involved, but as in much of Africa – rough roads, limited facilities and basic accommodation may require you to adjust your levels of expectation. Walking on the Mount Mulanje extension is graded 'moderate'.*

**NB:** *Barefoot Safaris is first and foremost a conservation company. Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed and detailed below, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of alterations to flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure such as accommodation, or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops may vary from those outlined. Included meals are indicated in the daily itinerary i.e. B LD - Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner).*

#### Day 1: Lilongwe

We collect you at the airport and drive to our lodge and check in.



At an elevation of 1000 metres above sea level, Lilongwe lies on the Central African plateau, to the west of the Great Rift Valley. Officially named as the new capital of Malawi in 1975, this landscaped city is an interesting place to explore. This afternoon is free which offers us the chance to visit the

city's Nature Sanctuary, Capital Hill, or the market area (all optional). We can also go for a nature walk and see the rural life around the lodge.

*Lodge; 1 night (D)*

#### Day 2: Liwonde National Park

This morning we depart Lilongwe travelling southwards via Balaka to Liwonde National Park, first visiting the market at Liwonde and then crossing the Shire River barrage where most of Malawi's electricity is generated. Entering Liwonde, Malawi's premier National Park, we drive slowly through the park, viewing game as we make our way to the lodge.

The park encompasses part of Lake Malombe, the Shire River and the eastern upper Shire Plain. Literally thousands of hippo and crocodile live in the river and there are several hundred elephants in the park, along with a variety of antelope. Black Rhinoceros has also been introduced into the



park and is currently protected by a large inner fenced section. The combination of riverine, mopane grassland and mixed bushveld ensures that the birdlife is also very varied.



*Elephant in the Shire River - Liwonde NP*

After arriving we settle in and have time for a game night drive. Mvuu means "hippo" in the local Chichewa language and the name epitomises the large numbers of hippo that inhabit the nearby Shire River.

*Lodge; 2 nights (2 x B, 2 X L, 2 X D)*

### Day 3: Liwonde National Park

On our second day in the park we undertake an early morning game drive and we might see Bushbuck, Common Waterbuck, Kudu, Elephants, Rhino, Sable Antelope, Warthog and Hippo. The afternoon is spent on a further game activity. There is also the chance of a boat trip on the Shire River, gliding silently through the reed beds to view jacana, egrets, ibis and kingfisher. Liwonde has something of interest for all who enjoy the complete natural state of the African landscape. We do a afternoon/night game drive before our dinner.



*Dikkop on the Shire River - Liwonde NP*

### Day 4: Lake Malawi

After an early breakfast we do a game drive out of the park on our way to the lake. We follow the lakeshore northwards towards Chintheche, passing the huge Dwangwa Sugar Estate. Our first stop is Chia Lagoon, a large bay linked to the main lake by a narrow channel. Today this inlet is a popular spot for fishermen, and we can watch local people fish, using large triangular nets on poles. Continuing north, there is opportunity to visit the mission hospital and the old slave market. The afternoon is free to relax on the beach.

Being the country's highest rainfall area, the countryside is particularly lush - even in the height of the dry season. Rural communities dot the surrounds and the steep, farmed slopes produce picturesque banana and

cassava plantations mixed with patches of indigenous forest.

Chintheche is situated on the central shores of Lake Malawi on what is acknowledged to be one of Malawi's finest beaches. Against the backdrop of the Viphya Mountains and patches of tropical rainforests, the white sandy beaches of Chintheche stretch for miles, broken only by small rocky outcrops.

*Lodge; 2 nights (2 X B)*

### Day 5: Lake Malawi

We have the entire day to relax on the lakeshore. Lake Malawi's tranquil waters are fringed by golden shores unsullied by pollution and dotted with lush palm, mango, avocado and banana trees, making it the embodiment of a tropical paradise. Today we can visit a nearby Tonga village and rural school (both optional), located on the site of a past battle between the Tonga tribe and Ngoni invaders. Alternatively, the lake offers a wealth of water-based activities (all optional) which include windsurfing, horse-riding, snorkelling, scuba-diving, excursions by motor boat, or possibly canoeing in a bwato, one of the traditional dugouts made from a single hollowed-out tree trunk, whose handling requires a delicate sense of balance.

### Day 6 and 7: Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve

After breakfast we pack up and drive to Vwaza. We head north along the lakeshore from Chintheche through rubber plantations, fishing villages, and the Kawalazi Forest Reserve, a remnant patch of lowland rain forest, where we may stop for some birding. We stop for a look at the famous port of Nkhata Bay. We soon arrive in Mzuzu, the bustling capital of northern Malawi, where we stretch legs and visit the market before heading on along good, tarred roads to the small settlement of Rumphu. After visiting a traditional Tembuka village, we head west to Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve. This low-lying reserve consists of a mixture of marsh and woodland, rocky hills, floodplain, the scenic Lake Kazuni and Zara Pool.



*Impala - Vwaza Marsh*

The area around Lake Kazuni supports a diversity of habitats, which range from marshland, swamp and small lake, to alluvial plain and wooded hillside. This creates an excellent environment for many species of antelope and their predators, as well as supporting elephant, buffalo, hippo and a rich variety of birdlife.

This afternoon we have the chance to do some game viewing and familiarise ourselves with some of the reserve's many

species before we start our camp fire and have our evening meal under the stars.

On our second day in the reserve we undertake an exciting walking safari, providing us with an excellent opportunity to enjoy the sights, sounds, and silence of the bush at a relaxed pace and is an experience not to be forgotten!



*Lake Kazuni, Vwaza Marsh*

We return to camp to avoid the midday heat, and relax in the shade before heading out again to explore further in the late afternoon. Whilst driving around the lake area we may see Waterbuck, Eland, Roan, Sable, Hartebeest, Zebra, Impala and Puku. At the lake itself there are many water birds to be seen, while a wide variety of riverine and woodland species are attracted to the vicinity of the Luwewe River.

*Lodge; 2 nights (2 x B, 2 X L, 2 X D)*

### Day 8 and 9: Nyika National Park:

After breakfast we pack up and drive to Nyika. This fascinating drive shows constantly changing habitats as the altitude results in different vegetation types, starting with subsistence farms and savannah, slowly turning to miombo woodland and then finally entering the park at Thazima Gate. From the gate to Chelinda we ascend through three distinct habitats (miombo, mountain thicket and montane grassland) before the vista opens up into the dramatic rolling grasslands of the Nyika Plateau.

Nyika National Park is Malawi's most spectacular wilderness area. It boasts an incredible mixture of scenery and landscapes - pristine miombo woodland, mature mountain forest patches, crystal-clear running streams and miles and miles of open, rolling grassland. Being situated at an elevation of over 2 000 meters guarantees a wonderful temperate climate, which is in particular contrast to the lakeshore areas of Malawi.

Game species that can be seen include Crawshaw's zebra, Roan Antelope, Reedbuck, Eland, Bushbuck, Warthog, Bushpig, Leopard, Spotted hyena, Side-striped jackal and Serval. Birdlife is prolific, the park being home to over 425 species of bird. Specials include Churring and Black-lored Cisticola, Montane Widowbird, Fülleborn's Boubou, Bar-tailed Trogon, Ruwenzori Nightjar and Olive-flanked Robin-Chat.



We settle in our chalets and go for a walking safari in the afternoon before returning to our camp site to prepare our food for tonight.

Activities (optional) that can be booked at the lodge are night game drives, guided walks and mountain biking expeditions across the plateau. Birding safaris and fly-fishing are also available.

On our second day here we do a walking safari in the morning to one of the dams and an afternoon game drive.

*Lodge; 2 nights (2 X B, 2 X L 2X D)*

**Day 10: Viphya Plateau**

Today we retrace our steps to Mzuzu and turn south to the lofty expanses of the Viphya Plateau. We visit a traditional Tembuka village en route. This afternoon we enjoy a nature walk led by our own guide. We walk along the high ridges overlooking the vast expanse of the South Viphya Forest Reserve, Africa's largest man made forest. On our walk we hope to see Crested Eagles, Auger buzzards, Danhams bustard, Snake eagles, Yellow baboon, Vervet monkey. Even Leopards can be seen crossing the tracks in the early morning mist.

*Forest Rest House (B)*

**Day 11: South Luangwa NP**

From Viphya Plateau we drive via Kasungu to the Zambian border at Chipata on our way to South Luangwa National Park. The Luangwa valley is one of Africa's prime wildlife sanctuaries, with concentrations and varieties of game and birdlife that have made it world famous. This is the landscape of the 'real Africa', with herds of antelope roaming the plains, predators stalking through the shadows, and primordial flora in every vale, where oxbow lagoons act as natural water holes. The list of animals that frequent the park is endless.



*Leopard: South Luangwa*

Mammals include Zebra, Buffalo and Lion, as well as endemic species such as Thornicroft's giraffe and Cookson's wildebeest. The park successfully supports one of the largest concentrations of Elephant in Africa and also has an expanding population of Leopard. For the next 3 nights we stay in our lodge set in a beautiful location on the banks of the Luangwa River just inside the national park. The afternoon, after tea, we do on an afternoon/night game drive in an open safari vehicle before returning to the lodge for dinner.

*Lodge; 3 nights (3X B, 3x L, 3 x D)*



*Sunset in South Luangwa*



*Giraffe - South Luangwa NP*

**Day 12 & 13: South Luangwa NP**

For the next two days we continue to explore this remote wilderness area that covers over 9,000 square kilometres by ding morning and night game drives daily. The park encompasses a wide variety of habitats and the Luangwa River describes a tortuous course along the valley floor.

Near the river the vegetation is lush and dense, and along its many tributaries riverine forest remains emerald green all year round. The option exists to do a walking safari as well (optional) this enables us to get close to the animals, without the confines of a vehicle. Accompanied by a qualified guide and an armed scout we venture past lagoons, ripereen forest and through Mopani woodland, seeing, smelling and touching Africa.

We may also make a night game drive to catch a glimpse of the nocturnal world within the park illuminated by spotlight. Viewing game at night allows us to see species that would normally be hidden throughout the day, and may include porcupine, hippo grazing on land and Honey badger. For scenery and sheer variety of animals, South Luangwa is one of the best wildlife parks in Africa. Multitudes of species thrive in this sanctuary, and the size of the national park

allows large herds to develop and live in harmony with each other.



*Lion - South Luangwa NP*

**Day 14: Lilongwe**

This morning, after a morning game drive, we leave the open vistas and staggering beauty of eastern Zambia behind and return to Malawi's capital, Lilongwe. Our drive takes us across the rich farmland of central Malawi. On arrival in Lilongwe in the early afternoon, there is the chance to do some last minute shopping and further explore this bustling capital.

*Lodge; 1 night (B)*



*Barefoot Lodge*

**Day 15: Transfer to Lilongwe International Airport.**

After breakfast, you will connect to a road transfer back to Lilongwe airport. We will ensure that you arrive at Lilongwe International Airport in time to connect to your onward flight connections. End of service.

*(B)*

**RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL**

Since January 2003, Barefoot Safaris has donated £10 for every person we take to Zambia, to assist with the funding and development of **Chanyoli School**. Parents and school staff have recently fired 60,000 bricks and will begin building this year. You may like to bring some books or school equipment to assist this very deserving project and see for yourself how well received it is.

We also support the **SOS Children's Village**, which you can visit in Lilongwe. They would be most grateful for any children's clothes or toys that you might donate.



## Price Includes:

- All transport on tour.
- All meals as per itinerary.
- All park entry fees as per itinerary.
- All game viewing activities as per itinerary.
- All armed scout fees as per itinerary.
- All accommodation fees as per itinerary.
- Tents and sleeping mattresses.
- Safari equipment.
- Reference library.
- Deep freezer.

## Price Excludes:

- Airfare.
- Visa fees.
- Airport taxes.
- Meals as per the itinerary.
- Park entry fees not included in itinerary.
- Drinks.
- Expenses of a personal nature.
- Any changes to the itinerary.
- Travel and medical insurance.

**NB:** Whilst camping everyone is expected help with camp cooking, camp chores, loading and unloading of the vehicle as well as making & breaking camp.

**\*\* Excursions:** A qualified grade 1 safari guide from Barefoot Safaris will accompany clients on all excursions except where it is necessary to employ a guide from local parks.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Climate:** Malawi's wet season runs from mid October or early November to March or April. During the rainy season, daytime temperatures are pleasantly warm, but low lying areas can sometimes be humid. The heaviest rain is confined to the highlands, while while the lakeshore is much drier.

The dry season tends to be cooler and generally runs from May to early October. During the dry season, daytime temperatures in the lower areas are fairly consistent at 21°C to 26°C. In the highlands daytime temperatures can be considerably cooler ranging between 10°C and 20°C. Nights can be particularly cold during the dry season, so warm clothing is essential. Eastern Zambia's climate is very similar to Malawi's. The cool and dry season runs from May to Aug; the hot and dry from Sep to Oct, and the wet season from Nov to Apr. South Luangwa is relatively low lying, so evening temperatures shouldn't be too low!

## Baggage:

- One piece of main luggage only (**max 12kg**), this should be a soft bag rather than a hard suitcase, so it can be easily stowed and not take up too much room in the vehicle or in the tent. Space in the vehicle is restricted.
- A day sack (large enough to carry your camera, water bottle, & binoculars etc) is also essential.
- Sleeping Bag

## Clothing and Footwear:

- For comfort in the heat, lightweight cotton is best. Brightly colored clothing is not appropriate for safari because it is easily seen by animals and has the added discomfort of attracting insects (wear muted tones in natural colors i.e. beige, khaki, olive, etc, but **not** army-style camouflage clothing).

- A long-sleeved shirt is essential to protect neck and arms while on game walks/drives.
- Long trousers and socks for evenings.
- Windproof/waterproof jacket.
- Lightweight trail boots.
- Trainers or sandals for relaxing.
- Sunhat.
- Swimming gear.
- Warm mid layers i.e. fleece or jumper for cool nights and early mornings
- Kagoul if you are travelling during the rains.

## Equipment:

- A laundry service may be available in some hotels, but we recommend you take biodegradable travel detergent
- Torch (Head torch is ideal)
- Water bottle
- Sunglasses, sunscreen and lipsalve
- Insect repellent
- Binoculars
- Dust can be a problem for cameras; take a dustproof bag

## Medicine:

- Basic personal first aid kit
- Any prescription drugs required
- Female sanitary products
- Malaria prophylaxis

## Visas and Permits:

**Malawi:** Holders of UK, USA, CAN, AUS, NZ, IRL, NOR, NL passports do not require a visa.

**Zambia:** Holders of UK, USA, NZ, NOR, NL passports do require a visa. It can be obtained at the border. In view of the unreliability of local communications however, you must be prepared to pay for your visa at the Zambian border (approx US\$65). It is unnecessary to acquire your Zambian visa in advance.

This information is given in good faith, but may be subject to change without warning. Please note that, where appropriate, obtaining a valid visa is ultimately your responsibility. Please consult a visa agency or the consular authorities 4-6 weeks before departure for the most up-to-date information.

## Vaccinations & Health Advice:

Vaccination requirements & other health advice can change, so please check with a specialized travel clinic for up to date information before you depart. For useful advice you can visit The Medical Advisory Service for Travelers Abroad [www.masta.org](http://www.masta.org)

Nevertheless we recommend that you protect yourselves against: *Malaria, Hepatitis A, and Polio & Typhoid as a minimum.*

**NB: The Yellow Fever vaccination is compulsory if travelling via an infected country. As you enter Zambia at a land border, coming from Malawi where yellow fever is endemic, the Zambian authorities will require you to produce a certificate to prove you have been vaccinated against yellow fever.**

**Food:** Although every effort will be made to accommodate any dietary requirements, the availability of certain products is limited in Malawi and Zambia. Any special dietary requirements should be explained to us in writing at time of booking. Gluten free flour should be brought with you if required. Decaffeinated coffee should be

brought with you if required.

**Local Costs:** 14 Breakfasts, 6 lunches and 6 evening meals are included. You must pay for all other meals yourself (you can eat very well for £10 a day). Approximate costs are given for guidance only, and may vary widely according to location and type of establishment.

Coffee/tea	UK£0.30
Soft drink	UK£0.30
Medium beer	UK£0.60
Local snack lunch	UK£2.00
3-course dinner*	UK£7.00

\*reasonable mid-range tourist class restaurant.

## Optional excursions:

Some or all of the excursions detailed below may be available; others not listed may also be available. Approximate per person costs are given for guidance only, and may depend on the number of participants. Your safari guide should be able to assist you in arranging them.

Snorkelling; half day	UK£7.00
Windsurfing; one hour	UK£13.00
Motor boat; half day	UK£13.00
Dug out canoe; half day	UK£1.50
Sunset Boat Cruise	UK£10.00
Luangwa night game drive	UK£16.00
Horse riding	UK£20.00

**Tippling:** For better or worse, tipping is an accepted part of everyday life, and - although it is always at your discretion - you will be expected to tip to reward service. Your group leader will give you an indication of when and how much is appropriate. This can vary widely, but please allow £25 per person for this tour.

**Seasonal changes:** Although all rooms and tents that we use are protected with mosquito netting; there will be insects and mosquitoes about. The camps are essentially "al fresco" so you should be prepared with insect repellent and appropriate long sleeved/legged clothing.

Insects are attracted to lights at night and are especially prevalent during the rainy season. Switching the lights off and placing a hurricane lamp a distance from you will remove the problem.

The evenings and mornings will be chilly from about June to August; so it is advisable to take a light sweater or fleece. The Highlands in Malawi has a much cooler climate, so if you are visiting these areas warmer clothes will be required during these months.

**Currency:** Malawian & Zambian Kwacha. We recommend that you bring all you need for the trip as cash in US\$.

**NB:** Pre 1990 dollar bills are not accepted in most African countries. In reality there is little opportunity to change money other than at the airport on arrival, so it makes sense to change what you will need for the duration of the tour. NB: small note denominations are not acceptable in Zambia, i.e. 1,5,10 & 20. Beware of marked, torn or dirty notes, as they may not be accepted. Your group leader will be able to advise you when and where else it may possible to change currency. Optional excursions can generally be paid in US dollars cash.

**Airport Tax:** Included in your airplane ticket.

## CLIMATE CHART

Lilongwe (1100m)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Temp: Average High / Low °C	27/17	27/17	27/16	27/14	25/11	23/8	23/7	25/8	27/12	30/15	29/17	28/18
Rain: Average monthly (mm)	208	218	125	43	3	0	0	0	0	0	53	125