



# BAREFOOT SAFARIS & Adventure Tours

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## TRIP DOSSIER

### Malawi: Classic Safari (CM) (7 DAYS LAND ONLY) Jorgen et al *Revised September 4 2014*

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. David Livingstone arrived at the lakeshore in 1861. Livingstone was one of the first medical missionaries to enter southern Africa, the first in central Africa, and he was often the first European to meet local tribes. He won their trust as a healer and medicine man and gained such a reputation amongst the villages he visited that he eventually had to limit his treatment only to those with serious illness. He was particularly sought for his skills in obstetrics, the surgical removal of tumours and ophthalmology.

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.

Malawi's people are friendly and outgoing, while being rooted in a patriarchal tradition that has a strict dress code. It is one of Africa's more densely peopled countries with a population of 13 million, and the country faces formidable challenges similar to other countries on the continent. The realities of modern African conservation are very apparent in Malawi but all the more marked because of its small size and unique topography. Chief among these challenges is a rural population that relies heavily on the basic natural resources of soil and water and the bounty they produce.

For those keen on experiencing African culture in all its complexity and beauty, Malawi is definitely the best country for this. 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.*

**NB. 1:** *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 you to our lodge and settle in.



*Barefoot Lodge, Lilongwe*

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, Capitol Hill, new Parliament or the market area (all optional). We can also go for a nature walk and see the rural life around the lodge. We do the safari briefing before dinner.

*En - Suite Lodge; 1 night*

#### Day 2: Senga Bay:

This morning we depart Lilongwe for Senga Bay. We stop at Mphunzi to see the village and the rock paintings. Afterwards we continue to Dedza lodge for lunch. After lunch we drive to Mua Mission via the Golomoti route. In the late afternoon we proceed to Senga.

Senga Bay is essentially a large inlet at the eastern end of the peninsula that juts into the lake from Salima, and provides excellent beaches and crystal clear water. It's the perfect place for a sunset boat cruise (optional).

The area is a popular destination for water sports, such as water-skiing, snorkelling, or windsurfing and is the perfect retreat for visitors with its sandy beaches, calm waters, rocky coves and a plethora of tropical fish. We have the opportunity of visiting the only cichlids fish farm in Malawi. (Optional)

*Lake Hotel, 3 nights (2 X B, 3 x D)*

#### Day 3: Lake Malawi:

Lake Malawi occupies one fifth of Malawi's total landmass, stretching 575 kilometres in length and 85 kilometres at its widest point. This 23,000 square kilometres of vast inland sea, is fed by 14 rivers but drained by only one, the Shire. This sluggish river begins its course to the sea at the lake's southern tip, and odd though it may seem, accounts for the dispersal of only one per cent of the lake's volume. The third largest in Africa, Lake Malawi ranks twelfth in size in world terms, and is the fourth deepest. One important feature is the abundance of fish with over 350 endemic species!

The lake bore witness to, many bloody massacres between tribes now long disappeared, as well as the horrific Arab



slave trade, which terrorised its inhabitants and resulted in a large proportion of them converting to Islam. It was even the scene of the first naval 'battle' and British victory of the First World War!



Lake Malawi

After breakfast we go for a morning walk to the nearby fishing village. In the afternoon we go for a three hour boat ride (optional excursion) to Lizard Island for snorkelling and visit to the island.

### Day 4: Lake Malawi:

The day 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.

Sengabay 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 Senga stretch for miles, broken only by small rocky outcrops. 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.

As this day is set aside as a free day, if you would like to do any of the excursions your guide can assist you with the booking of that, (Optional).

### Day 5: Liwonde National Park

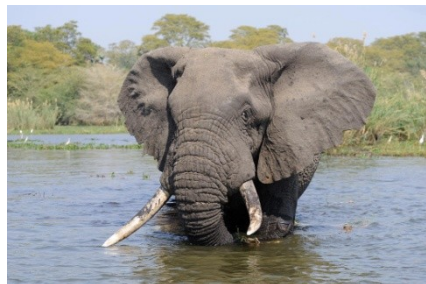
This morning we depart Sengabay travelling southwards via Balaka to Liwonde National Park, first visiting the market at Liwonde and then crossing the Shire River barrage where most of Malawi's electricity is generated.



King Fisher on the Shire River - Liwonde NP

Entering Liwonde, Malawi's premier National Park, we drive slowly through the park, viewing game as we make our way to the camp site/ 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 set settle in at the lodge and may have time for a game drive. Mvuu means "hippo" in the local Chichewa language and the name epitomises the large numbers of hippo that inhabit the nearby Shire River. We have the chance to do a river safari or a night drive. This is optional and your guide will assist you to make the booking for it. Again we might do an optional night game drive. 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 may also be the chance of a boat trip on the Shire River (optional), 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.

*En -suite Tent, Safari Lodge B,L,D*

### Day 6: To Zomba:

We go for an early morning game drive (in boat). 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. 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. 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 to prepare our evening meal under the stars.

On our second day in the reserve we undertake an exciting walking safari (optional), 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!



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. We cook again under the African sky.

*En Suite Rooms; 1 night (B, D)*

### Day 7: Transfer to Blantyre Airport:

After breakfast, you will connect to a road transfer back to Blantyre. We will ensure that you arrive at Blantyre 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 accommodation fees as per itinerary.
- All drives to the view points at Zomba
- All the tour leader activities and meals.
- The cost of your tour leader and the barefoot driver/guide
- All park entry fees & car/bus entry fees.
- 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.

**\*\* 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.

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.

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. 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:** 5 Breakfasts and 5 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	USD \$ 1.00
Soft drink	USD \$ 1.00
Medium beer	USD \$ 2.00
Local snack lunch	USD \$ 5.00
3-course dinner*	USD \$ 15.00

\*reasonable mid-range tourist class restaurant.

### Optional excursions:

Your safari guide should be able to assist you in arranging them.

**Tipping:** 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 **\$ 40** 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 Kwacha. We recommend that you bring all you need for the trip as cash in US\$.



## BAREFOOT SAFARIS & Adventure Tours

**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. 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 be 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