



# BAREFOOT SAFARIS & Adventure Tours

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Private Bag 357  
Capital City  
Lilongwe 3  
Malawi

## TRIP DOSSIER

### Malawi & Zambia: Classic Safari (CM) inclusive of Optional Mount Mulanje Extension (MLM)

(15/22 DAYS LAND ONLY) 17/24 days from your destination

Revised May 2006

The first Europeans to arrive in Malawi and Zambia were Portuguese explorers who reached the interior from the East Coast. However, the most famous visitor was David Livingstone, whose exploration heralded the arrival of Europeans in a way, which was to change the nature of the region forever. The establishment of missions to promote the spread of Christianity and the abolition of slavery soon followed. We tread in the footsteps of those early pioneers through a land of spectacular scenery, unparalleled hospitality and unique wildlife. Malawi, lying within the tropics at the southern end of the Great Rift Valley, is affectionately referred to as 'The warm heart of Africa'; not only is the climate warm, but Malawians really are among the friendliest people you could hope to meet.

Anyone who enjoys scenic beauty will find the country richly endowed, from forested reserves, National Parks and broad highlands to the peaceful shores of Lake Malawi. In contrast Eastern Zambia offers the chance to explore one of the best wildlife areas in Africa. Luangwa National Park contains one of the largest concentrations of elephant, as well as supporting a wealth of other species and habitat. This journey, rich in contrast and adventure, is full of unforgettable experiences. You can even continue your trip to southern Malawi to take in the fabulous game parks there as well as the unique upland areas such as Mount Mulanje and the Zomba plateau.

**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:** *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. BLD - Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner).*

#### Day 1: Fly to Malawi

#### Day 2: Lilongwe

We arrive at 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).

Lodge; 1 night

#### Day 3: Liwonde National Park

We leave Lilongwe and we travel via Balaka southwards to Liwonde National Park. We visit the market at Liwonde, then cross the barrage (Shire River) where most of the electricity in Malawi is generated. We enter Liwonde National Park which is the prime National Park in Malawi and do some game viewing on our way to the camp. The park includes 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, plus a variety of antelope. Black Rhinoceros has been introduced into the Park. The combination of riverine, mopane grassland and mixed bushveld ensures that the birdlife is very varied.

Camping; 2 nights

#### Day 4: 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 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.

#### Day 5: Senga Bay, Lake Malawi

Today we continue in a northern direction towards Lake Malawi. The lake occupies one

fifth of Malawi's total landmass, stretching 575 kilometres in length and 85 kilometres at its widest point. The 23,000 square kilometres of this 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 lake has witnessed 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! The third largest in Africa, Lake Malawi ranks twelfth in size in world terms, and are the fourth deepest. One important feature is the abundance of fish - over 350 endemic species! 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 chichlids fish farm in Malawi.

Lodge; 1 night

#### Day 6: Chintheche, Lake Malawi



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.

*Camping; 2 nights*

### Day 7: Chintheche, Lake Malawi

We have the entire day to relax on the lakeshore. Lake Malawi's tranquil waters are fringed by golden shores unspoiled 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 8: Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve

Today we leave the vast expanses of Lake Malawi behind, and journey further north, passing through Mzuzu – 'the Capital of the North', and the main gateway to the northern region. 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.

*Fixed camp; 2 nights (LD)*

### Day 9: Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve

On our second day in the reserve we undertake an exciting safari per vehicle. This provides 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! 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 return to camp to avoid the midday heat, and relax in the shade before heading out again to explore further in the late afternoon.

*(BLD)*

### Day 10: Viphya Plateau

Today we retrace our steps to Mzuzu and turn south to the lofty expanses of the Viphya Plateau after visiting a rural school, which is sponsored by us by contributing to its development and upkeep. 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 and even leopards can be seen crossing the tracks in the early morning mist.

*Forest Rest House (BLD)*

### 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. and oxbow lagoons act as natural water holes. The list of animals that frequent the park is endless. 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 night we stay in a camp set in a beautiful location on the banks of the Luangwa River just outside the national park.

*Camping; 1 night (BLD)*

### Day 12: South Luangwa NP

This morning we depart on one of the biggest adventures: a walking safari in the wilderness of South Luangwa. 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 to our bush camp on the elevated banks of the Luangwa River. After our lunch under huge shady Natal Mahogany trees, we undertake another walking safari along the bank of the slow-moving Luangwa. Tonight while the aroma of our camp meal fills the air, we salute the sun going down over the distant escarpment.

*Bush Camp (Optional); 1 night (BLD) or Camping; 1 night (BLD)*

### Day 13 & 14: South Luangwa NP

This morning we undertake another walking safari back to our permanent camp next to the Luangwa River. For the next two days we continue to explore this remote wilderness area that covers over 9,000 square kilometres. 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 afternoon we do a game drive in the National Park followed by a morning and afternoon game drive the next day. We may also make a night game drive (optional) 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.

*Camping; 2 Nights (Bx2, Lx2, Dx2)*

### Day 15: Lilongwe

This morning 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)*

### Day 16: Depart Lilongwe

### Day 17: Arrive Home

## 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.



### **MOUNT MULANJE EXTENSION:**

**Why not round-off your trip with our extension to southern Malawi with an opportunity to walk on the summit of scenic Mount Mulanje?**

#### **Day 16: Chingoni Forest**

After breakfast we drive to the Chingoni Forest Reserve via the Dedza Pottery, which has fine handcrafts and manufactured ceramic products. In the afternoon we explore the Chingoni forest, which has a mixture of plantation and indigenous woodland, with some rock outcrops offering spectacular views of the surrounding terrain. The Chencherene rock shelters, where San-type (Bushman) geometric rock-paintings are to be found are certainly worth a visit (optional). This region with its rocky hills typically contains the black eagle and lanner and peregrine falcon, while the black stork, mocking chat, rock cisticola and large striped pipit may also be spotted.

*Overnight rest house (D)*

#### **DAY 17: Lengwe National Park**

This morning we travel through Blantyre to Lengwe National Park. Blantyre is a city rich with history: it was a settlement before gold gave birth to Johannesburg and the name was derived from David Livingstone's birthplace. The road from Blantyre plunges down the Shire Escarpment in a series of hairpin bends with excellent views over the Shire River and out towards the Zambezi River on the hazy horizon. The afternoon is spent on a game walk and visiting one of the game viewing hides.

*Camping / National Park Chalets; 2 nights (BD)*

#### **DAY 18: Lengwe National Park**

On our second day in the park we undertake an exciting safari on foot accompanied by an armed game scout. This provides us with an excellent opportunity to enjoy the sights, sounds and silence of the bush at a relaxed pace, and is an experience never to be forgotten. Lengwe National Park is well known for its population of nyala antelope, a localised but very beautiful antelope found here at one of the most northerly points of its range in Southern Africa. This park was first protected as a Game Reserve in 1928 and lies in the Shire River Valley that forms part of the southern end of the Great East African Rift Valley system.

*(BD)*

#### **DAY 19: Mount Mulanje**

Leaving the lowlands behind we ascend the Shire Highlands on our way to Mount Mulanje. We pass Thyolo (pronounced "Cho-lo") and it is a most pleasant experience to drive through the tea plantations. Refreshing emerald green tea bushes cover the rolling hills to the sides of the road. After this we descend to the Phalombe Plains from where we can begin to admire the grandeur of the Mulanje Massif in the distance. Mount Mulanje ranks as one of Malawi's most majestic sights and soars steeply to around 3,005m, the highest peak in Central Africa. We do an afternoon walk to one of the waterfalls.

*Overnight rest house (BD)*

#### **DAY 20: Mount Mulanje**

Today we hike up to Chambe Basin to the forestry hut. Porters carry our packs to the top. 'The Island in the Sky' is an appropriate name for the massif. Mount Mulanje rises steeply and suddenly from the undulating plains, surrounded by near-vertical cliffs of bare rock, many over a thousand meters high. Vegetated valleys, where rivers drop in spectacular waterfalls, dissect the cliffs. The afternoon is at leisure. For those who want to do a scramble up Chambe Peak, a guide will be arranged (optional). The hike up Mount Mulanje to Chambe Basin is non-technical and on paths, some of which are steep and fairly strenuous, but within the scope of any reasonable active and energetic walker. Alternatively, those who do not feel up to it can opt to stay behind at the pleasant rest house at the foot of the massif with a chance of taking some guided walks, before rejoining the group the following day.

*Overnight mountain hut (BLD)*

#### **DAY 21 - Zomba Plateau**

We descend Mount Mulanje this morning and drive on to our overnight camp on the enchanting Zomba Plateau, which rises 915m above the surrounding plains. This is a place of sheer beauty with its flowering trees and shrubs, clear mountain air, trout streams and fantastic scenery. We spend the rest of the day on the plateau with time left free for personal exploration.

*Overnight camp (B)*

#### **DAY 22: Drive to Lilongwe**

This morning we follow the Rift Valley to Lilongwe. En-route we stop at Mua Mission where we visit the Kungoni Craft Shop, full of paintings and wood sculptures by local people. A visit to the Chamare Museum, an exhibition of traditional indigenous art, crafts, weapons, clothing, implements and ornaments (both modern and old) is worth while as there is nothing like this museum anywhere else in Malawi and few other in Southern Africa (optional). The afternoon is free for a last look around the Capital.

*Overnight lodge (B)*

#### **DAY 23 – Trip Ends Lilongwe**

Transfer to airport and fly to your destination.

*(B)*



## Price Includes:

- All transport on tour.
- All meals as per itinerary.
- All park entry fees.
- 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.
- 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 coloured 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 colours 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
- Sleeping bag
- 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, but with sufficient advance warning it may be possible to have this requirement waived. 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 specialised travel clinic for up to date information before you depart. For useful advice you can visit The Medical Advisory Service for Travellers 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:** 7 Breakfasts, 7 lunches and 7 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

**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 £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:** Please allow US\$30 payable on leaving Lilongwe

## 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