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Malawi

TRIP DOSSIER

MOZAMBIQUE EXPLORER (ME+): Malawi Extension (8 DAYS LAND ONLY)

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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

Grading: *Anyone in good health with a sense of adventure should be able to take part. There is no real physical difficulty involved, but as in much of Africa, rough roads, limited facilities and basic accommodation may require you to adjust your level of expectations.*

NB: *Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed in the brochure and detailed below, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of alterations to flight/boat/train schedules, climatic conditions, 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 17: 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 18: 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.

Game lodge, 2 nights (BD)

DAY 19: 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. We have the opportunity to visit Mwabvi Game Reserve

See PAW website:

www.projectafricanwilderness.org (BLD)

DAY 20: 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 21: 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 Basis 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 22: Liwonde National Park.

Leaving Mt Mulanje, we travel to Liwonde National, the prime 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 rhinos have been introduced into the Park. The combination of riverine, mopane grassland and mixed bushveld ensures that the birdlife is very varied. During our visit to the park we might see bushbuck, common waterbuck, kudu, elephants, rhino, sable antelope, warthog and hippo. The afternoon is spent on further game activity. There may also be the chance of a boat trip on the Shire River (optional), gliding silently through the reedbeds to view jacana, egrets, ibis and kingfisher.

Overnight camp (B)

DAY 23: Drive to Lilongwe

This morning we follow the Rift Valley to Lilongwe. En-route we stop at Senga Bay to visit a fish farm or to have a last swim in Lake Malawi. The afternoon is free for a last look around the Capital.

Overnight lodge (B)

DAY 24: 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: When 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 and Mozambique's wet seasons run from mid October or early November to March. 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 the lowland in Mozambique 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 to 26°C. In the highlands daytime temperatures can be considerably cooler ranging between 10 and 20°C. Nights can be particularly cold during the dry season, so warm clothing is essential!

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
- Kagool if you are travelling during the rains.

Equipment:

- Mask, snorkel and fins (flippers)
- 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: Mozambique requires a visa. Please obtain one beforehand.

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

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 Mozambique at a land border, coming from Malawi where yellow fever is endemic, the Mozambique 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 Mozambique. 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: 10 Breakfasts, 8 lunches and 4 evening meals are included (17 Breakfasts, 10 lunches and 9 evening meals are included if taking the Mt. Mulanje extension). 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

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 Kwacha and Mozambique Meticalash. 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 Mozambique, 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 be 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: Malawi

Lilongwe (1100m)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Temperature: 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