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Kavinga Safari Camp is located in a private concession within the southern boundary of Mana Pools National Park, approximately 1 kilometre upstream of the confluence of the Ruckomechi and Chiwuye Rivers. The camp overlooks the dry Ruckomechi riverbed and is set against the extraordinary backdrop of the Zambezi Escarpment.

This camp consists of 7 comfortable raised tents built on the edge of the cliff, facing east, with a view of the rising sun above the magnificent Zambezi Valley floor. Each tent has been designed with an emphasis on privacy and is surrounded by insect repellent gauze, allowing the air to circulate and contributing to maximum coolness. Inside each tent are 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ comfortable beds and an ensuite bathroom with a dressing area. In front, a verandah falls in line with the edge of the cliff giving a feeling of infinite space.

The central dining and lounge area has a deck above, providing a magnificent view across the dry riverbed and to the pan below. The camp accommodates 14 guests in total.

Approximately 9km from camp is the renowned Chitake Spring, which has a legendary reputation for superb game viewing and predator sightings. The herds of buffalo that drink at the spring through the dryer months are frequent visitors to the area, as they traverse the valley in search of grazing. Most evenings, herds of elephant gather in the riverbed, providing a wonderful wildlife spectacle. Shyer species, like leopard, civet and genet, visit the pan right below the camp under the cover of darkness.

Our professional guides have accumulated a vast amount of knowledge about the movements of the various species in the area. This has enabled them to pinpoint specific vantage points, which together with a carefully disguised hide allow memorable photographic opportunities, so that guests can capture those sought-after once-in-a-lifetime shots.

If it's adventure you seek, be it walking, tracking, exploring the hills and river systems, studying the birds or just relaxing in camp taking in the view, Kavinga Safari Camp will offer you that "Unique Experience in an Untamed Wilderness".

ACCESS TO CAMP

Access to the camp is either by air or road. The camp is just 30km off the main tarred Chirundu road, making it easy for self-drivers. The concession has its own airstrip, situated approximately 5km from the camp, so you can enjoy a 20 minute game drive whilst en route to camp. The strip is 1,100m long and its GPS coordinates are: 16 °08'49.75" S 29°24'54.75" E. The name of our airstrip is Rukomechi and the aviation designator is: FVRK.

ACTIVITIES

Mana Pools National Park has so much to offer. Photographic opportunities are plenty and the flora and fauna is diverse. Game drives, night drives, bushwalks, birding and stargazing are the main activities on offer. Please do let us know if you have any particular interests.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

It is ideal if guests arrive in time for lunch on their first day in camp and depart after breakfast on their last day in camp to give staff enough time to prepare.

BEST TIME TO VISIT

Mana Pools is a very seasonal National Park and guests' different interests will often dictate the best time to visit. Animal sightings are at their best in the hotter months - August to November. For those interested in the smaller things, such as birds, butterflies, insects and flowers, the early season period from April onwards provides a spectacular variation. Game viewing is also good during this time but the concentration of game is not as considerable.

CAMP STAFF

We have nine camp staff on site who work hard at making your experience as comfortable as possible.

CAMP LOCATION

Kavinga Safari Camp is situated in a private concession within the southern boundary of Mana Pools National Park. The camp is located approximately 1km above the confluence of the Rukomechi and Chiwuye rivers near the escarpment, built on a cliff on the western bank of the dry Rukomechi riverbed. GPS log stat: 16°07'06.07"S 29°24'07.62"E.

CHILDREN'S POLICY

Kavinga is a very wild camp so unfortunately we must advise that we cannot accept children under 10 years old, unless by special prior arrangement or in a group booking the whole camp. Only a maximum of 3 people staying in a tent (eg. 2 adults + 1 child OR 1 adult + 2 children). We have a no under 14 years old walking age restriction.

CLOTHING

Casual lightweight cotton, khaki or neutral coloured clothes are recommended. For those who are fair-skinned, long-sleeved shirts should be considered. Please also bring a sturdy pair of worn-in walking shoes and perhaps a comfortable pair for the evenings. We would also suggest you bring a fleece, sweater or warm jacket for those cool evenings and early morning game drives. A wide brimmed hat is essential.

COMMUNICATIONS

Please note that our camp is situated in a remote area where communications are often very limited. There is sometimes coverage from the local Net One and Econet cellular networks but this is not guaranteed. There is wifi available. If you are concerned about keeping in touch, you may wish to bring a satellite phone with you if you have access to one.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Nothing beats an early morning walk in the wilderness. Due to the large number of elephant coming to drink in the afternoon, we recommend only walking in the mornings. We do not have a set routine, as every day is an adventure, and all activities will be different depending on the game activity and guests' particular interests.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Please advise of any special dietary requirements or allergies, i.e. seafood or peanuts, or gluten or lactose intolerances.

ELECTRICITY

There are lights in your room, as well as electrical plug points to charge your electronic devices (please do not use for hairdryers). To maintain an eco-friendly environment, the camp is run entirely on solar power with a generator on standby only as a last resort. The solar geysers tend to get very hot on sunny days, so we advise turning on the cold tap before the hot tap when taking a shower.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

All our food is homemade. Everything is cooked in camp, including the beautiful bread and cakes our chefs surprise us with. Health is very important to us, so we do try our best to reduce the amount of unnecessary fats. Breakfast is a two-course meal of porridge, yoghurt and fresh fruit to start, followed by a cooked breakfast, later a light lunch, tea and cake before your afternoon activity, snacks with sundowners and a three-course dinner in the evenings. We do provide a selection of locally available beverages and house wines but please do let us know your preferences so that, if possible, we can do our best to ensure that these are available on your safari.

GUIDES

Zimbabwe has one of the toughest training programs for guides in Africa. It takes up to 4 years to become a licensed professional because of the experience required to pass the exams. Zimbabwe guides are not usually accompanied by scouts or Parks rangers, but carry their own firearms, which are only used for your protection.

IMPORTANT ITEMS TO PACK

Binoculars, torch, camera, walking shoes, fleece, long-sleeved lightweight shirt for hot days or protection against mosquitoes in the early evening, wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen, mosquito repellent, antihistamine cream for those annoying bites and itches and enough medication you may currently be taking for the duration of your safari. Don't forget extra batteries and CF/SD cards for your cameras.

LAUNDRY

This can be done for a small number of articles, and will be pressed. We regret that large amounts of clothing cannot be handled. A small container of washing powder is provided in the bathrooms for personal/delicate items.

LENGTH OF STAY

We generally recommend a minimum stay of two to three nights in order to experience all that the area has to offer.

LUGGAGE RESTRICTIONS

Please use a soft bag if you are travelling on a charter flight. There is generally a limit of 15kg plus 5kg of hand luggage per person.

MALARIA

Malaria is prevalent throughout Zimbabwe. We strongly recommend that you consult with your doctor regarding taking a malaria prophylactic prior to your safari. Remember that prophylactics often need to be taken 4 to 6 weeks after the end of your safari. The most important precaution against being bitten by mosquitoes is to cover up and to apply repellent.

MEDICAL & TRAVEL INSURANCE

We must have notification of any medical conditions, i.e. Diabetes, heart disease, recent surgery, etc.

Please ensure that you take out the necessary travel and health insurance for your holiday.

If you are on prescription medication, please ensure you have an adequate supply to last the duration of your stay.

PHOTOGRAPHIC HIDE

At the edge of our watering hole, almost at eye-level, is a well-camouflaged, extremely safe and comfortable game-viewing/photographic hide. You won't forget the experience of watching a family of elephant drinking, splashing and wallowing in the pan just metres away or holding your breath as a herd of buffalo rush into the water for a long noisy drink.

SAFETY

Kavinga has a strict rule against feeding wild animals. The baboon troops, as well as elephant and warthog, are frequent visitors in camp and provide fantastic photographic opportunities and entertainment. They have not learnt that humans provide food so please do not feel intimidated or show aggression towards them. No fruit is to be kept in your rooms, please hand it over to management so it can be stored in a safe place. Due to our close proximity to a valuable water source, many animals are attracted to the camp. It is important to keep your wits about you when walking in camp both during the day and night. It is imperative to use a torch when walking around camp grounds at night. After dinner, our guides will escort all guests to their rooms. Please do not leave your room after you have been dropped off by your guide. Whistles are provided in each room to call the guides in the event of an emergency.

SEASONS

Mana Pools landscape is always changing. From the very wet rainy season, full of thick green shrubbery, to the hot dry season where there is nothing left on the ground but dust.

April – the bush is thick and green with plenty of wild flowers adding splashes of colour. There is plenty of water in the outlying pans, so much of the wildlife is inland. The impala start rutting and spectacular fighting is seen, as the rams battle it out for the ewes. The bush is dense so it can be difficult to spot the game hidden in the Jesse bush surrounding the area.

May - winter is on its way. It never gets freezing cold in the valley - just a light jacket or fleece jumper is needed in the early mornings and evenings.

June - beautiful blue skies and green landscapes. The vegetation shows signs of thinning out and the animals move closer towards more permanent water sources.

July – winter is here. Temperatures range from 26°C during the day down to 6°C at night. The elephants start to move to the river and springs, being seen mostly in the afternoons for their daily drink.

August – an incredibly windy month. The wind does have a routine, as it generally picks up around ten in the morning and by four in the afternoon everything is calm. The wind is not unpleasant, as the temperatures during midday increase.

September - Apple Ring Acacias start to drop their pods. Elephants are everywhere and you may be lucky to see the big bulls stand up on their back legs to reach the higher branches. Most of the shrubbery has disappeared and the plains game is plentiful. Temperatures begin to rise and the tsetse flies are more prevalent.

October – temperatures are high and the game sightings are amazing. There is always something happening and never a dull moment. The tsetse flies are at their worst, even the lions agree, as you will often find them sitting on top of a small tree trying to outsmart the tsetse. Temperatures are mostly in the late 30`s but do drop slightly at night.

November - it is hot and dry, all the ground cover is gone and the animals are fighting for food. In the afternoon, you can feel the clouds building and teasing the Valley ground. Towards the middle of the month, the weather becomes humid and is often followed by a storm. The rains begin and, although the experience is wet, the valley turns green and flowers blossom almost overnight. There are baby impala and warthog everywhere and the Valley is relieved.

TRANSPORT

Transport from our airstrip to camp is provided free of charge. Guests using a road transfer option can be met at a designated point and driven to camp. Directions are provided to guests who would like to make their own way there. Transfers to Kavinga from the Chirundu border or from other camps in Mana Pools can be arranged.

TSETSE FLIES

Please note that Mana Pools National Park is in a tsetse fly region. Tsetse fly bites can sometimes be irritating, so please bring antihistamine tablets, cream or other appropriate medication, if you are prone to allergic reactions from insect bites. Wear loose fitting clothing on game drives, a light waterproof jacket may also help. We suggest that you also avoid black and dark blue clothing, as these colours tend to attract the flies.

WATER

Borehole water is provided in camp, which is filtered and suitable for drinking. However, there is also drinking water provided from an additional filter at the bar. Please note that we do not encourage the use of plastic water bottles. Drinking water is provided in the rooms in jug flasks and water bottles are provided for activities, which they may use and refill. Hot water in flasks for tea and coffee in your room in the morning can be provided upon request.

WILDLIFE

Mana Pools has a good reputation for predator sightings. There are four of the Big Five in the park, as the rhino was removed for its conservation in the early 80's. Elephant and buffalo are seen regularly; lion and leopard are present but can be elusive. Cheetahs are occasionally seen but are a big treat as they cover such vast distances. The nearly extinct wild dog (African Painted Hunting Dog) population has increased and it is always a memorable experience to see them in their natural environment. There is plenty of plains game such as bushbuck, waterbuck, impala, kudu, eland, nyala on occasion and warthog. There is also a huge variation of the smaller creatures like mongoose, porcupine, civet, and honey badgers. The rare brown hyena, serval, pangolin and aardwolf have also been sighted in the Kavinga concession. Birds are plentiful. Great sightings of Western-Banded Snake Eagle, Pels Fishing Owl and Red Necked Falcon to name a few, as well as the hugely sought after and elusive African Pitta.