

DESTINATION INFORMATION



ZIMBABWE



Voyeni
Creating Escapes for the Soul

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WEATHER

Although located in the tropics, temperate conditions prevail all year. Typically the best times to visit are during the months of April and May and from August to October. It is coolest in June and July. During this time it can get very cold at night and in the early morning, particularly when on safari, so we would like to suggest that you pack accordingly – warm clothing including an anorak/winter jacket, a beanie, scarf and gloves are recommended. September and October can be very hot and very dry, and game viewing is limited to areas where there is permanent water like Mana Pools, Lake Kariba and along the Zambezi and Chobe rivers. Game viewing at waterholes in Hwange and Gonarezhou is excellent at this time. Statistically the rainy season is from November to March, although rainfall is relatively lower than in other tropical parts of the region.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mobile phone connections for calls are good, and local sim cards are also available. The mobile internet is also generally good and Wi-Fi is widely available in most international hotels/lodges/camps in the main towns/safari areas.

The Victoria Falls/Zambezi River experiences low water levels between August and January (subject to rainfall).

At this time it is preferable to stay on the Zimbabwe side rather than the Zambian side of the Falls.

LANGUAGE

English is the official language and most Zimbabweans are fluent. Ndebele and Shona are also widely spoken. Zimbabwe is the country with the highest literacy rate in Africa.

WATER

It is advised to drink purified water available in your accommodation or you can also buy bottled water in the shops. Please remember to be conscious about not using plastic if possible. Borehole water is usually perfectly safe to drink, but be sure to check always.

ELECTRICITY

Many of the safari camps are situated in remote areas and have to generate their own electricity. Generators, are used as a main power source, whilst in some camps gas heating is used and solar units charge the batteries located at each tented room, providing good 12V lights all night (if used sensibly). There are only 220V power points in camp. If you have an item that runs on 110V, please bring a converter. Batteries are charged in the main area or office while you are out on an activity so please bring spare batteries for use. Electrical plug outlets are not available in most tented camps and therefore it is not possible to use appliances such as hairdryers or electric shavers during your stay there. Sleep apnoea machines can be accommodated by arranging for a battery and an inverter to be placed in the rooms, however, please note that prior warning is required. In major cities, electrical appliances run on 220/240V AC accessible via 14-amp, British type 3 square-pinned plugs. While some camps may be able to supply adaptors (3-prong round, 3-prong square, 2-prong round, 2-prong flat) it is advisable that you carry your own. Remember also to bring the appropriate phone, ipad and other appliance adaptors.

**ZIM TIME
ZONE
GMT +2**

HEALTH

**Please check the latest information
with your medical practitioner**

Malaria precautions must be taken especially if travelling to all the Safari areas of Zimbabwe. You must please consult your doctor before you travel to ensure that you are prescribed the correct type of protection.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography near sensitive sites like border crossings, dam walls, road blocks or the airport is **strictly prohibited**. Please be sensitive and ask for permission if you wish to take a photograph of local people. Beware of self-appointed officials trying to charge fees to take pictures of well-known sites of interest.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

All visitors need a passport which remains valid for six months after proposed entry into Zimbabwe. The information set out below is valid as at January 2018. It is subject to change at short notice and you should contact your local Zimbabwe Embassy or consul services or your travel agent to travel in order to gather the most up to date information. If possible and required, our recommendation is to obtain your Zimbabwe visa prior to arrival, as this will expedite the immigration process at both airport and border crossing. You can do this by applying at the following link:

<https://www.evisa.gov.zw/>

If visas are required and bought on arrival, please ensure you have the correct **cash** amounts (US Dollars) available as change is often not available. You must advise the relevant official of the **total** number of days that you are spending in Zimbabwe otherwise you may be charged to obtain an extension/additional visa later on. If you arrive in Zimbabwe before continuing with your safari in another country (such as Botswana, Namibia or Zambia) and then return to Zimbabwe prior to departure; or will be staying in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe and doing some touring across the border into Botswana or Zambia, then a **double-entry** visa must be obtained on arrival from the immigration official. To find out which visa regime you qualify for please visit <https://www.evisa.gov.zw/#/VisaRegime>



The KAZA Uni Visa is now available and costs US\$ 50.00. This is a permit for unlimited entry into any of Zambia and Zimbabwe within 30 days of travel. You may also enter Botswana for a once off day visit ONLY on this visa. Kindly view the latest information here:

<http://www.kazavisa.info/>

SECURITY

Zimbabweans are mostly very peaceful people and there is an especially low level of crime directed at tourists. Be vigilant at all times. Mugging and other forms of theft can take place in city centers, especially after dark. Exercise caution at airports, and when leaving banks and cash points. Try not to carry large amounts of cash and avoid travelling around alone if possible.

BAGGAGE

Light aircraft travel has a strict luggage restriction of *15 kg per person* including hand luggage, depending on your destination. If you need to bring luggage in excess of your allowance, you may have the option of buying an extra seat. This "seat in plane" allows for a maximum of 70 kg (154 lb) excess weight, on the proviso that the bag/s conforms to the dimensions 40 x 40 x 80cm (16 x 16 x 31 inches); soft bag, i.e. no wheels/frame/rigid structures; able to physically fit onto a light aircraft seat; able to be physically secured with one seatbelt; will not impact on the comfort of other guests on the flight. The additional cost of this varies depending on your flight schedule so please contact your agent for further details.

It is strongly recommended that you use a **soft-sided carry bag or a duffel bag** plus a small piece of hand luggage such as a handbag or small rucksack (which is also convenient for use on game drives to contain your camera gear, binoculars, sunscreen and hat particularly if on an all-day game drive). The weight allowance is a requirement of all light air travel for space and safety reasons.



Should guests have excess luggage which does not need to accompany them throughout their safari, and they are arriving as well as departing from Victoria Falls, we can make arrangements for the excess luggage to be stored in our Victoria Falls/Harare operations offices at an extra charge of US\$ 20.00 per bag. The luggage can then be returned to the guest either at their hotel in Victoria Falls/Harare (if they are staying overnight) or by luggage transfer to the airport. This service, which is normally the most practical method of handling excess luggage in Zimbabwe, is charged for at a nominal rate and you are advised to pre-book it through your agent prior to travel. We do not anticipate any problems with stored luggage being damaged or stolen, however, guests must ensure that they are in possession of full travel insurance including luggage cover.

DRESS CODE

Generally Zimbabweans dress smartly and in business attire. Otherwise the dress code is casual, although some international hotels and restaurants require gentlemen to wear long trousers for dinner, and in some rare cases a jacket and tie. Good manners and respect come naturally to Zimbabweans, charming national traits which they look upon visitors to reciprocate.

WHAT TO PACK ON SAFARI

Casual, relaxed, breathable and light weight clothing (ideally UV protected as the sun can be strong) is best when you are on Safari. You can get away with packing light as laundry facilities are available at all the camps, lodges and hotels. It is however worth noting that often you will need to wash your own underwear and delicate clothing yourself.

Expect warm weather for the most part and humidity at times. Shorts and short sleeved shirts are ideal during the day unless you have a strong sun sensitivity. At night it is advisable to wear lightweight long pants and shirts to protect yourself from being bitten by mozzies and bugs. Most accommodation will provide insect repellents for you to use during your stay. During the winter time you must pack some warm clothing – compact sweaters and long pants are great and even some gloves/scarf for early morning drives. It can get pretty chilly at night and in the evening as well as early mornings, but it is invariably warm during the day.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a pre-requisite of travel that all travellers take out comprehensive travel insurance. This must cover cancellation or curtailment of arrangements, emergency medical evacuation, medical expenses, hospitalization, repatriation, baggage loss and loss/breakage of valuables.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

Clothing

**Note: ideally brown, beige colours. Bright colours scare animals. Be careful to avoid camouflage army style gear though.* The list below is just a guideline and is not exhaustive

- Comfortable walking shoes
- 1 x pair slops/sandals
- Long sleeve breathable shirts
- Short/Long Pant combinations
- Wide brimmed hats
- Swimsuit
- Warm compact clothing (esp. in winter)

Accessories

- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Prescription glasses/Contact Lenses
- Mosquito repellent
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Battery chargers & Memory cards
- Personal toiletries
- Personal medications (esp.Malaria)

Brands/Shops who stock great safari gear

- Columbia
- Northface
- K-Way
- Cape Union Mart

DEMOGRAPHICS

The population is around 13 million (compared to 45 million in each of Kenya and Tanzania). The main cities are Harare (population estimated to be more than 2 million), Bulawayo, Gweru and Mutare. Zimbabwe is about the same size as California or Japan. Zimbabweans are religious and at least 85% are Christian, most of whom regularly attend church. As in other African countries, Christianity may be mixed with traditional and ancestral beliefs. Black ethnic groups make up more than 95% of the population, by far the largest group being Shona followed by Ndebele, who are of Zulu origin. There are also Tonga and Shangaan as well as others of Bantu origin. Minority ethnic groups include white Zimbabweans, Asians and those of mixed race.

GRATUITIES & TIPPING

Tipping is NOT compulsory; these are simply guidelines and suggestions for a 'thank you' for good service. Work on approximately 10% of the bill for restaurant meals and hotel services (but check the bill, some add in a service charge. Here are some general guidelines for other once off services:

Porterage: US\$2-US\$3

Transfer driver: US\$2-US\$3

Safari Guide: US\$10 per day

Camp Staff: Most safari camps and some hotels have a general tip box or you can consult the manager for the best procedure.

CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY

As a resident Destination Management Company we are deeply connected to the wildlife and communities of Zimbabwe and the region. We endeavour only to support suppliers who have the best interest of wildlife and community at heart. Tourism, when managed properly, can play a huge role in alleviating challenges faced by both people and wildlife. There are many organizations in Zimbabwe that are doing incredible work to conserve, rehabilitate and assist communities and wildlife be it through community upliftment projects, anti-poaching efforts, conservation levies etc...

Please do not hesitate to contact us for advice or information on what we are doing and how you can assist!

During your journey you may encounter people less fortunate than yourself. In some cases you may want to assist immediately. Please follow our advice and first check with your guide before responding as what may seem the right thing to do could have an adverse effect when you are not fully informed.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Zimbabwean beef is world-renowned. There is no shortage of good vegetables and fresh fruit e.g. Pineapple, mango, paw-paw (papaya), banana, oranges and watermelon are all inexpensive when in season. Freshwater fish from the abundant rivers and lakes are also plentiful, especially superb bream (*Tilapia*).

Victoria 22 and Amanzi are considered the number one restaurants in Harare, whilst the Livingstone Room in Victoria Falls is world renowned.

You can always eat well in hotels, with The Victoria Falls Hotel offering several excellent restaurants including the rather grand Livingstone Room, with its seven course *degustation menu*. For something different, try the Boma Restaurant at the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge which offers an interesting and creative African experience on an expansive scale.

For something local, try *sadza*, which is a maize porridge often served best with a tasty relish.

South African wines are normally excellent and in plentiful supply. An excellent local lager beer is *Zambezi*.

As a former British colony, Zimbabwe has retained English habits. Elevenses (mid morning tea and biscuits) and Afternoon Tea are widely observed, as is the ritual of a Gin and Tonic as a sundowner!

MONEY

The Zimbabwean dollar is no longer in active use after it was suspended by the government due to hyperinflation. The United States dollar is now the official currency and attached to this is the local Bond Currency, which is only traded in Zimbabwe. The Euro, the British pound, the South African Rand and the Botswana Pula are also accepted in tourist areas.

Take US\$ cash and keep small denominations notes handy.

International Visa and Master Credit Cards are widely accepted and can be used in most hotels, restaurants and shops of the main cities and tourist related areas/services.

ATMs are rarely reliable.

Western Union and/or Money gram outlets, where cash can be transferred and accessed the same day, can be found in almost every main street throughout the country.



LOCAL COSTS

Here are some approximate ideas of what to expect in terms of additional costs if you are not on a fully inclusive itinerary.

Meals: In the main towns expect to pay about US\$12-18pp for lunch and US\$18-25pp for dinner.

Drinks: Bottled mineral water costs about US\$1.50 in stores and US\$3 in hotels and restaurants for a 1.5 litre bottle. A local beer will cost about US\$3-4.00 in a hotel and US\$1-2.00 in a bar in town. Coffee will cost US\$1-2.00. Meals in some local restaurants can offer real value.

SHOPPING

Shopping for arts and crafts in particular is a fun activity and bargaining is widely accepted even encouraged in the markets like those in Victoria Falls and Harare. Pottery, basket weaving, textiles, jewellery and wood carving is traditional. Amongst the distinctive finds are symmetrically patterned baskets and stools carved from a single piece of wood. Shona sculpture has become world famous in recent years, especially with carved figures human figures and animals, often made with soapstone, serpentine or verdite.

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

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