

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Malawi and South Luangwa (ZA 2017)



TRIPDURATION
12
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate

Tour Type: Small Groups
Accommodation
Grade: Standard

Trip Code: ZA

Trip Highlights - Malawi and South Luangwa

- ✓ Game viewing - In search of the big game of Africa in one of the most unspoilt and off-the-beaten-track destinations.
- ✓ Zomba Plateau - Excellent bio-diversity on a forested plateau.
- ✓ South Luangwa - One of the finest national parks in Africa and the most renowned destination for walking safaris.
- ✓ Lake Malawi - Take an optional activity or relax on the shores of the last of the Great Rift Valley lakes.

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 4 nights Standard Lodge
2 nights Standard Hotel
1 night Simple Cabins
4 nights Lodge

Included Meals: 11 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 9 dinners

Start Point: Join trip: Lilongwe
End Point: Trip ends: Lilongwe
Transport: 4WD, Minibus
Countries: Malawi, Zambia

Malawi and South Luangwa Safari

Often referred to as the 'Warm Heart of Africa', Malawi is a hidden gem among its larger southern African neighbours. We walk across the forested Zomba Plateau offering incredible panoramas over Mozambique and descend to the shores of the impressive Lake Malawi. Staying in comfortable lodges and chalets, we cross into Zambia for some world-class game viewing in South Luangwa National Park.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

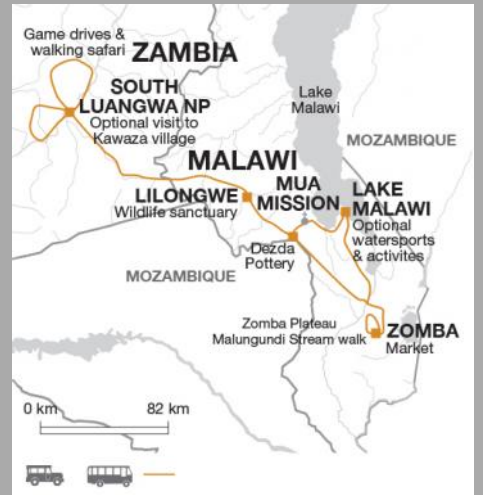
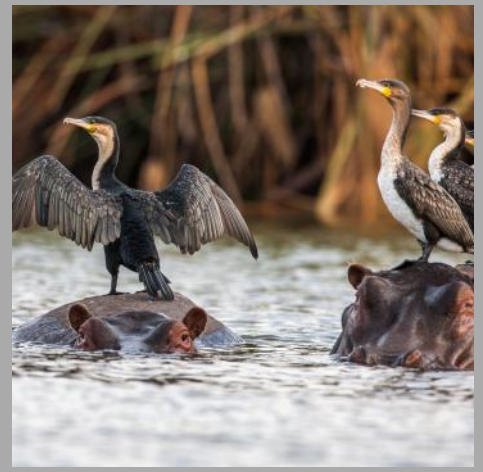
While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour Lilongwe; afternoon guided walk in Lilongwe Sanctuary

Arrive in Lilongwe, Malawi's bustling capital, where we check-in at our lodge. This city started out as a small village along the banks of the Lilongwe River and was a small British colonial administrative centre when Malawi was known as Nyasaland. It was only when Dr Hastings Banda became president that Lilongwe became the capital of Malawi. Some say he ordered the move away from Zomba because he was born in the village along the banks of the river. Today Lilongwe is divided into two distinct parts of the Old Town and New Town with the Lilongwe Nature Sanctuary in the middle! The Old Town has the appearance of a traditional African settlement, while the New Town has much in common with other modern African urban developments. Its gleaming modern buildings with their garden-like settings contrast vividly with the colourful and vibrant hustle and bustle of Old Town. The Lilongwe Nature Sanctuary is a large stretch of land that aims to provide a location to help rehabilitate animals; a centre to educate the surrounding communities in



the importance of conservation and offer a recreational facility for the citizens of Lilongwe. We spend the afternoon here walking through the Sanctuary.


Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Drive to Zomba via Dedza Pottery; visit local markets

This morning we head toward the Zomba Plateau via Dedza. The Dedza-Kirk Highlands is the name given to the mountain range that forms part of the Great Rift Valley mountains that separate Malawi from Mozambique. As we journey toward Zomba, there should be some opportunities to take photos of this stunning landscape. The southern part of Malawi is littered with inselbergs, or island mountains. These are small granite mountains that stick from the landscape like islands and add a stunning addition to an already beautiful landscape. We stop en route at Malawi's famous Dedza Pottery. The pottery was started by Chris and Charity Stevens and has been tested and passed by the British Ceramic Research Association meeting all international safety standards. It is here that we will have the opportunity to have a brief tour of the famous pottery workshop. This was started in 1987 and has grown significantly, today it is one of the biggest exporters of ceramics in Southern Africa. Anything bought here is always a welcome memento of time spent in Malawi. When we reach Zomba, we will spend a little time in the town's market before heading up toward through the forests to our night stop on the edge of Zomba's Plateau.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 On Zomba Plateau: guided walk

Zomba is the smallest of the three main plateaux in the country and is divided in two by the Domasi Valley. The entire plateau is a forest reserve with the northern area designated a wilderness section. It has a unique high tropical micro-climate and a huge biodiversity of birds and animals. This morning we take advantage of the cooler climate to take in the splendour of the plateau. We shall head towards Chingwe's Hole which local legend says is bottomless and once used as a burial chamber! We take in the dramatic scenery from the edge of the plateau from both Emperor's and Queen's View. The views were named after Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia who visited the area in 1964 and after Queen Elizabeth who visited Zomba in 1957, respectively. The plateau rises to nearly 7000ft (2100m) and from these viewpoints one can see the plains of Africa stretching far out to the horizon. The town of Zomba is at the base of the plateau with the Shire (pronounced 'sheer-re') River meandering lazily toward the Zambezi River far in the south and even further is Mt Mulange. The sheer edges of the escarpment are also covered in indigenous forest where, if you listen and look carefully, you may just hear or see blue monkeys jumping from tree to tree through branches draped in old man's beard. Walking through the forests of the plateau, with its cool climate, one realizes what a unique experience being here really is!


Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4 Drive to Lake Malawi

As we drive down to the plains, we will see many bicycles laden with firewood for consumption in the town below. This morning we head north to spend time on the shores of Lake Malawi. David Livingstone was the first European to reach the lake, arriving at its shores in 1859 and naming it 'Lake Nyasa'. Because much of the surrounding area was claimed by the United Kingdom, it formed the basis of the new colony's name of Nyasaland. The Lake has a colourful history. It was here that a British warship sunk the first German vessel of WW1 on hearing that war had broken out! The Malawian government refers to the lake as Lake Malawi rather than Lake Nyasa because of deep-rooted geopolitical disputes between all the neighbours bordering the lake. There are also contested fishing rights as a result of long colonial administration boundaries and Malawi even has islands located deep in Mozambique waters! Be that as it may, Lake Malawi is the third largest lake in Africa, the ninth biggest in the world and the last of the Great Rift Valley lakes. It is rich with fish and this is the Malawians natural source of protein. The cichlids of the lake are often found in aquariums around the world and are particularly well known for having evolved rapidly into a large number of closely related but morphologically diverse species, important in the study of speciation in evolution.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Optional activities Lake Malawi

Our time is spent enjoying and soaking up the unique environment of the lake complete with white sandy beaches! You might even indulge yourself with a leisurely visit to a nearby island, participating in the various watersports available or how about a little boat trip? If this sounds far too much like hard work, you may wish to just take it easy and lie on the beach!


Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 6 Visit Mua Mission; overnight at Kuti Wildlife Reserve

After a leisurely start this morning, we head up the lake's coast where we stop off at Mua Mission. The mission is famous for the quality of wood carvings and was established in 1976 by a Canadian missionary Fr. Claude Boucher Chisale who dedicated his life to researching, recording and preserving Malawian culture. It is here that one gains a very deep and profound understanding and insight into the history and culture of Malawi through the Chamare Museum, the Carving Centre and the new Research Centre/Library. From here we will drive to Kuti Wildlife Reserve, a game park that is fighting to protect local wildlife and prevent deforestation. We will take a game drive in the park and whilst there is no big cats in the area, we can still hope to see giraffe, wildebeest, zebra, kudu and large herds of Sable. Due to the lack of big cats the park offers great walking opportunities and is perfect for birdwatchers.


Overnight: **Simple Cabins**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Drive to South Luangwa National Park

This morning sees us up early for the drive across the Zambian border to South Luangwa National Park. Our camp at South Luangwa provides comfortable accommodation in chalets with private bathrooms and verandas even a small swimming pool.


Overnight: **Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 Game viewing in South Luangwa

South Luangwa is Zambia's premier park and is widely noted for its large concentrations of game, with counts indicating 59 animal and over 400 bird species. The exact itinerary will depend on local conditions, but during our time at South Luangwa we include 4 half-day activities, be they game drives or walking safaris, and there is plenty of time for you to choose your own optional game viewing activities. Nestled within the Great Rift Valley, South Luangwa National Park covers a vast area of 9,050 sq. km and is bordered on its east side by the meandering Luangwa River. The park encompasses a wealth of habitats, including shaded mopane woodland, riverine forest, thickets, lagoons and grassland providing plenty of variety during morning or afternoon game drives. Walking safaris are a very popular activity in this remote wilderness area and are said to have originated in this park. Accompanied by an experienced park ranger or 'scout' and a guide, they permit us the rare privilege of walking among wild animals in their natural environment, whilst also learning about smaller aspects of the bush. This is a fantastic opportunity to discover and learn about the plant life and animal spoor. Night drives in search of nocturnal wildlife, such as leopard, genets, civets and honey badgers are also a popular activity in Luangwa and offer a different perspective of life in the bush.


Overnight: **Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 In South Luangwa NP

Today is a free day, where you may wish to relax and enjoy the facilities of our accommodation or take optional game drives or walking safaris. Alternatively, while we are here, there is an opportunity to take an optional visit to a nearby village and glimpse what life living like this might be like.


Overnight: **Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10 In South Luangwa NP

South Luangwa is one of the finest parks in southern Africa and so we spend another day in search of wildlife as we continue with our game drives or walking safaris.

Overnight: **Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11 Drive Lilongwe

Today we re-trace our steps back to Lilongwe out of the bush out of Zambia and back to Malawi as we drive to Lilongwe. Your afternoon is free for personal exploration and sightseeing

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 12 In Lilongwe where tour ends

Your African adventure comes to an end today, with the tour ending after breakfast.



Included Meals: Breakfast

Included Activities

As part of our Responsible Tourism program, we would like to advise of the Donate a Mosquito Net Charity within Zambia. This scheme purchases mosquito nets from a local provider and donates the nets to the Mus Hospital in Dedza. The nets cost US\$13.00 each and your Tour Leader will advise fully during the trip on how anyone may partake within this charitable activity if they so wish.

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 11 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 9 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Malawi

Lunch £: 10.00

Dinner £: 20.00

Zambia

Lunch £: 8.00

Dinner £: 20.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Malawi

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 1.00

Zambia

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 1.00



Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

South Luangwa N. Park - Additional Walking Safaris US\$ 75 & Game Drives US\$ 75 (minimum of 3 for both activities). Additional Park fees US\$ 25 for one day entry. Kawaza Village visit US\$ 40.

Lake Malawi - Snorkel and Fins US\$ 10; Boat Trips US\$ 25 for half day/ US\$45 for full day (minimum of 3 for the boat trips); Island cruise US\$ 25; Canoeing US\$ 20. Please note that not all activities may be available.

Tipping - Tour Leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 50 for tipping. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

Malawi

ATM Availability: Available Lilongwe but they are unreliable.

Credit Card Acceptance: Very few places outside main cities will accept credit cards

Travellers Cheques: Unreliable, there is also at least 1% commission charged

Local Currency: Malawi Kwacha

Recommended Currency for Exchange: We recommend taking your money in US\$ cash (only accept post 2006 US\$ notes) Avoid the lower and higher (US\$1, 5 & 100) denomination notes, as they are difficult to change. Please note that it is difficult to convert local currency back to US\$'s so please ask your Tour Leader for guidelines on how much to exchange

Where to Exchange: Your Tour leader will advise you.

Zambia

ATM Availability: In the cities and larger towns, the larger banks have ATMs.

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards have limited use in Zambia, and incur a 5% bank charge.

Travellers Cheques: Can be difficult to exchange.

Local Currency: Zambian Kwacha

Recommended Currency for Exchange: We recommend taking your money in US\$ cash (only accept post 2006 US\$ notes) Avoid the lower and higher (US\$1, 5 & 100) denomination notes, as they are difficult to change. Please note that it is difficult to convert local currency back to US\$'s so please ask your Tour Leader for guidelines on how much to exchange

Where to Exchange: Your Tour leader will advise you.

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducing Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Malawi: It is possible to obtain Visas on arrival for UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian passport holders, which are chargeable. We have been advised a multiple entry visa will cost US\$150 per person on arrival. Alternatively, a multiple entry visa can be obtained prior to departure. All other nationalities, please consult your nearest Embassy for up to date advice on necessary visa requirements. Please be aware that visa information is subject to change, therefore please refer to your nearest Malawi embassy for up to date advice.

Zambia: Visas are required by UK, Canadian, US, Australian and New Zealand passport holders. Please note it is possible for UK passport holders to obtain their visa on arrival at all ports of entry. All other nationalities, please consult your nearest Embassy for up to date advice on necessary visa requirements. All passports must have a minimum of 6 months validity from date of return to your home country.

Travel via South Africa (including transits): From 1st June 2015 South Africa will enforce new immigration regulations effecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via the country. The new laws state that parents and/or guardian maybe requested by the airline and/or South Africa immigration officers to provide additional documentation for each child they are travelling

with. Please refer to the South African House website for full requirements: http://outhafricahouseuk.com/visas/vis_forcit.html and your airline for up to date requirements. Please be aware that visa information is subject to change.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on **0208 5431846**.

Vaccinations & Protection

Malawi

We strongly recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, and polio. Malaria is present in the region so consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Yellow Fever: Please note you will need a Yellow Fever Certificate for border crossings between Zambia and Malawi. Bilharzia: The existence of bilharzia has been reported in certain areas of Lake Malawi. Please be aware that if you choose to swim there may be a risk of contracting bilharzia. However, certain medical advice indicates that it can be cured with tablets available through your Travel Clinic. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Zambia

Yellow Fever is no longer compulsory for visits to Zambia, however please note that travellers that have previously travelled to or via countries that are endemic to Yellow Fever may be asked to present a Yellow Fever certificate at immigration/borders in Zambia. For a list of Yellow Fever affected countries please refer to: <http://www.who.int/ith/2015-ith-annex1.pdf?ua=1> We strongly recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, and polio. Malaria is present in the region so consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria.

Preparing for your Trip

Climate

Malawi

The main rainy season is from January to March. Rain is widespread and generally falls in the form of a thunderstorm in the late afternoon; grass tends to be long and there is more water about so game is more dispersed. Otherwise it is dry, with low humidity for most of the year. Temperatures reach around 29°C during the day with quite cold nights throughout the year. Early dry season is the most pleasant time for temperatures and the best for bird watching. For game viewing though the late dry season is better. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Zambia

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Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight, but a warm sweater and/or fleece jacket is advisable as nights can be cold as Zambia lies on an elevated plateau. Nights at Lake Malawi can also be cold. It can be particularly cold on early morning game drives until the sun has risen. Rainwear is useful in case of an unexpected downpour. A scarf is advisable for dusty drives. Do not wear bright colours whilst game viewing.

Equipment

Take a torch, water bottle, sunhat and sunblock. Binoculars are useful, as is a telephoto lens for keen photographers. Take a swimming costume and towel. Mosquito nets/screening is provided locally in the rooms where necessary, although you may wish to take some insect repellent. Bring your mask and snorkel if you want to peek into another submarine world!

Footwear

Lightweight trail boots or shoes with grip for walking safaris plus trainers or sandals for general travelling.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of luggage (a soft bag or holdall) plus day sack.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Malawi

Population: 10,000,000

Size of Country: 118,500 sq km

Major Language: English, Chichewa

Religion: Protestant, Catholic, Muslim

Time Difference to GMT: +2

Zambia

Population: 10,000,000

Size of Country: 752,600 sq km

Major Language: English, Bemba.

Religion: Christian & Indigenous

Time Difference to GMT: +2

Electric Supply & Plugs

Malawi

3 Pin Flat

Zambia

3 Pin Flat



Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

These trip notes were printed on 24/05/2017 21:50:54

