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Sensational Zimbabwe - a World of Wonders

Zimbabwe - just the name brings associations to the mysterious and enigmatic African continent. A country that, as in the world of fairy tales, has been through so much horror, but which is now riding a wave of renewed hope and optimism, and which is once again opening itself up to the world and to us as guests.

And lucky for that, because Zimbabwe has so much to offer – a unique and diverse culture with a rich history that few have seen and heard; a population that is one of the most highly educated in Africa, welcoming its guests with open arms with their warm friendliness; an unspoiled wilderness and some of Africa's most beautiful nature, which provides fertile ground for unique safari experiences. The country's tourism policy has limited the number of tourists by maintaining a relatively high price level, which has led to limited wear and tear on the wilderness and the sensitive environment. Therefore, we often meet far fewer tourists compared to most other countries in Africa, which provides a far more authentic and adventurous experience.

The country is home to a total of 5 areas that are on UNESCO's World Heritage List. In order to be on the list, the site must have a unique significance, which is considered the common heritage of mankind. Of all Zimbabwe's natural wonders, Victoria Falls is the most famous. The world's second largest waterfall is considered one of the world's most spectacular with its width of 1.7 km and a drop of 128 meters at the highest point. It was the English explorer David Livingstone who, as the first white man, on 17 November 1855 "discovered" the waterfall and named it in honour of the then English Queen Victoria. He described his first impression of the falls as *"the most wonderful sight I have seen in Africa"*.



Zimbabwe is a song that, once heard, is never forgotten. An atmosphere that meets the needs of every soul. A magic that enchants everyone who meets her. Her voice produces many melodies. Welcome to Zimbabwe – a world of wonders.

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Evergreen Escape has tailormade a 12-day combined cultural and safari trip, which gives you the chance to experience a country where the experiences almost come like pearls on a string. A journey where you both experience the fantastic wildlife, unique historical monuments, and meet the local tribes on their terms:

***Matobo National Park – Hwange National Park
Great Zimbabwe Ruins – Matobo Hills – Khami Ruins – Victoria Falls
Ndembele-tribe – Shona-tribe – Tonga-tribe***

A true treat of a journey named: **Zimbabwe – a world of wonders**

The journey begins in the country's capital, Harare. Its proud historical and cultural heritage is reflected in several well-preserved old buildings, and with its many green oases with flowering trees, is referred to as "The Sunshine City".

We experience wildlife in Africa's third largest national park, Hwange National Park, which is world famous for its large herds of elephants, and in the smaller Matobo National Park, where we will meet the rhinos on foot.

In Lake Kariba we go on a boat safari, where we can see hippos and crocodiles, and experience the very special African sunset, where the sky is lit up in the most fantastic colours.

We will experience four of the country's five historic areas of monumental importance, all of which are on UNESCO's World Heritage List. Among other things, the ruined city of Great Zimbabwe, founded in the 11th century, shows a rich and developed culture before the first Europeans set foot on the continent; and Matobo Hills, which contains Africa's largest collection of rock art dating back more than 3000 years, and where we also visit the burial site of Cecil John Rhodes.

We both see, hear, and feel the world's second largest waterfall, Victoria Falls. And we get the opportunity to go back to colonial times for a while as we enjoy our tea at the legendary Victoria Falls Hotel overlooking the Victoria Falls Bridge.

But no trip to Zimbabwe is complete until we have visited the hospitable population far removed from classic tourism. Therefore, we visit a township in the country's two largest cities, Harare, and Bulawayo, which is inhabited by people from the two largest tribes – Shona and Ndebele. We also visit two villages, where we experience the daily life of rural people up close.



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Day 1: Arrival to Harare – The Sunshine City

Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, is the country's largest city with a small population of 2 million. The city was founded in 1890 by the British South Africa Company and was originally called Salisbury, named after the then British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury. In connection with Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, the city name was changed to Harare.

The city centre, where the densely trafficked streets run perpendicular to each other, is characterized by business life and administration. As is typical of many African cities, the city has a wonderful mix of modern skyscrapers in all styles and several well-preserved buildings from the colonial era. By African standards, however, Harare has a significant and versatile industry, i.e., with processing of agricultural products (cotton and food). The companies are predominantly located in large industrial districts in the south-western part of the city, where you will also find the world's largest tobacco auctions.

The northern suburbs were formerly reserved for the white population and contain large villas in park-like gardens. The populous districts to the south and west of the city are very densely built up, as they have attracted large parts of the immigration from the rural areas. However, Harare has very few actual slums, and the many open green areas with numerous Jacaranda trees and other flowering trees contribute to the city being rightly called The Sunshine City.



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When you have passed through passport control at the airport, your Danish Tour Leader, local tour guide and driver are ready to welcome you. You will be driven to your hotel, so you have the opportunity to have a refreshing shower before we go on a short sightseeing tour around the city.



We spend the night at the 3-star Hotel Queensgate, which is centrally located within walking distance of the centre of Harare. The hotel has a charming garden that is a pure oasis of calm.



Accommodation: The Queensgate Hotel (<https://www.queensgatebaines.com/>)

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Day 2: Harare – sightseeing

After a good night's sleep, it's time to get out and experience and feel the vibrant atmosphere in Harare.

We begin today's sightseeing by driving past the Parliament, located in a former hotel for the British colonizers. We hear little about the political situation and developments in the country after President Mnangagwa took over from Mugabe in 2017.

Currently, a new parliament building is under construction just outside the capital. It is estimated that the construction will cost approx. 140 million USD. It is fully paid for by the Chinese government, which considers it a donation to the country and underlines China's influence on the African continent.

From there we drive to the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences, which includes houses the 700-year-old drum Ngoma Lungundu, which is said to have been made from the remains of the original Ark of the Covenant, which according to the Bible was the chest where the 10 Commandments were kept. The drum, which belongs to the Lemba people, is considered very sacred and was used to communicate with the gods. In the local language, Ngoma Lungundu means "the drum that thunders". The drum is the oldest wooden object ever found in sub-Saharan Africa.

After the museum visit, we will go out to experience the local people up close when we visit colourful Mbare, which is the oldest township in Harare. Mbare was founded in 1907 when British colonizers' development of Harare led to an influx of people from Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia looking for jobs. The township was founded near the oldest cemetery with graves of white settlers from the 1890s, in an area that was used for slaughtering animals and where the sewage was discharged.



Today, the township is home to the country's largest fruit and vegetable market, and we will interact with local residents in their daily activities and meet farmers who bring their fresh produce here.

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On our tour around Mbare, we will also see markets where recycled clothes and handmade souvenirs are sold. Among other things, we will visit the Canon Paterson Craft Centre where local artists make the world-famous Shona sculptures. The name comes from the country's largest tribe, the Shona. Zimbabwe actually also got its name thanks to the Shona people's long craft tradition of stonework. In the mid-19th century, a burgeoning artistic movement emerged that developed the tradition of stonework into more artistic works.



We continue our sightseeing tour to the granite mound Harare Kopje, where it all began, so to speak. In 1890, Cecil Rhodes formed the group Pioneer Column, which consisted of 250 settlers who migrated from South Africa to what was then Southern Rhodesia to colonize the country. With the raising of the British flag here on the hill, it marked that the colonization had succeeded.

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In the afternoon we drive to Domboshava Rocks, located approx. 35 kilometres northeast of Harare. It is a series of rock formations formed by natural erosion. Here we will enjoy the fantastic view with a sundowner.



After an eventful day, we drive back to our hotel, where it will be possible to relax and absorb the day's impressions.

Accommodation: The Queensgate Hotel (<https://www.queensgatebaines.com/>)

Meals: Breakfast and sundowners

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Day 3: Harare – Masvingo

(Distance: approx. 353 kilometre)

After breakfast, it's time to say goodbye to Harare and continue south to the next highlight of the journey – Great Zimbabwe. Together with a local guide, we will take a big step back into the past and experience the origins of what we know today as Zimbabwe.

The name Zimbabwe is derived from "Dzimba Dzembahwe", which in the local Shona language means "stone houses without the use of mortar". The name refers to Great Zimbabwe, an ancient city in present-day Zimbabwe, which was built from the 11th century and continued until it was abandoned in the 15th century. The city is estimated to have had 18,000 inhabitants at its peak. Archaeological artefacts, including Chinese pottery shards and coins from Arabia, show that the city was an important trading city. Among other things, Arab merchants bought up ivory and gold on their way to the coast.



The 7 km² area was added to UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1986, and today consists of the largest collection of ruins in Africa south of the Sahara. Some of the walls are up to five meters high and stand there to this day despite the lack of mortar. The high walls symbolized prosperity and power. It is therefore assumed that Great Zimbabwe has functioned as a palace for the local king. Why the city was abandoned remains a mystery to this day.

Among the more notable elements were 8 carved bird sculptures 40 cm high, which stood on 90 cm high columns. They are completely unique to this area, as they have not been seen anywhere else in the world. It is believed that the birds, which resemble an African osprey or a golden eagle, were sacred and were considered messengers from God. In the late 19th century, these birds were stolen from the area by an English hunter and local tribes. As a curiosity, it can be mentioned that one of the birds was sold to Cecil Rhodes, who installed it in his house in Cape Town, and decorated the staircase of the house with wooden copies. He also made a stone copy, three times the size of the original, which adorned the gate of his house in England.

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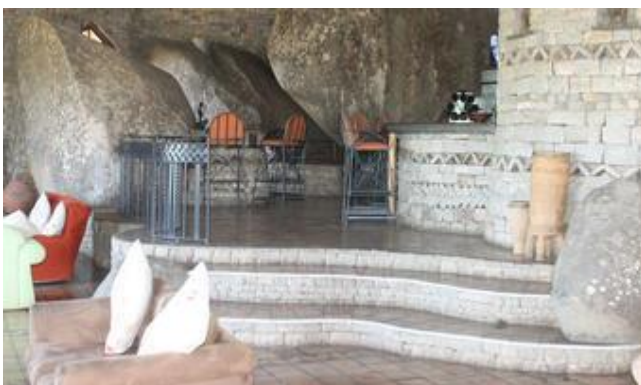
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Shortly after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, 4 of the birds were returned from South Africa and another 3 were returned from Europe and are now back in Great Zimbabwe. The last one still stands today in Cecil Rhodes' house, which today has been converted into a museum in Cape Town. The Zimbabwe bird can be seen on the national flag, stamps, and

coins.



We continue our journey into the past as we drive on to our lodge for the night – Lodge at the Ancient City. It is built on a rocky outcrop and has a wonderful view across the valley towards the Great Zimbabwe ruins. The cabins are decorated in such a way that we can almost feel like an African king for a night.



Accommodation: Lodge at the Ancient City (<http://ancientcitylodge.co.zw>)

Meals: Breakfast and dinner

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Day 4: Masvingo – Bulawayo – Matobo Hills

(Distance: approx. 354 kilometre)

After a wonderful breakfast, it's time to shake off yesterday's dust and continue the journey towards Bulawayo, which is the country's second largest city. On the outskirts of the city is Makokoba, which was the first black township in the city. The township is named after Mr. Fallon, who was the first commissioner in the area, and who usually walked around with a cane ("ukukhokhoba" in the local Ndebele language). The word describes the noise of the cane hitting the ground ko-ko-ko.



No trip to Zimbabwe would be complete without visiting a local urban community and getting a real feel for their daily life. So, this morning we are going out to experience the everyday life of the local inhabitants of Makokoba. It is estimated that there are approx. 20,000 from the Ndebele tribe in the township. Despite the economic and social challenges, it is also a township characterized by hope, where artists, writers, musicians, and athletes flourish against all odds.

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On the tour, we get the opportunity to experience the large market, where all kinds of local and traditional things are sold, including traditional medicine. We will see some of the small bars and restaurants, and we will experience the local people up close.



After an eventful tour, we continue our journey to Chipangali Wildlife Orphanage. Chipangali is a refuge for wild animals that do not have much chance to survive in the open. These are animals that are orphaned, sick, born in captivity or have been unsuccessfully tried to be kept as pets. The centre was opened in 1973 by former ranger Vivian Wilson and his wife Paddy.



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Chipangali has been featured in countless documentaries and is famous for being one of Africa's largest and most successful wildlife rehabilitation centres. When possible, the rehabilitated animals are returned to the wild. If this is not possible, they retain the animals for educational purposes and zoological research.

After the visit drive to the Matobo Hills and our lodge for the next 2 nights – Farmhouse Lodge – in plenty of time to enjoy a sundowner while absorbing the day's experiences.



Accommodation: Farmhouse Lodge (www.farmhousematopos.com)

Meals: Breakfast and dinner

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Day 5: Matobo Hills & Matobo National Park

After breakfast, it's time to go on a game drive in Matobo National Park. The scenery in Matobo is literally breath-taking.

A land area characterized by massive kopjes, which are small, rounded peaks of granite. Matobo National Park is located right in the heart of the Matobo Hills and is the country's oldest national park from 1926. In 2003, the area was added to UNESCO's world heritage list.

The national park is only 425 km² and is very little visited compared to the country's largest national park, Hwange National Park. But even though the park does not have the greatest concentration of wild animals compared to Hwange, it is actually the best park for spotting both the white and black rhino. The reason the rhinoceros are called black and white is not, as one might be led to think, that they are of different colours. But this is simply due to a translation error – when it was discovered that there were two different types of rhinoceros, the difference between them was purely physical. One type of rhino's head was wider than the other. This word was heard as "white", and thus the two types of rhinoceros were named and coloured after a translation error.



As part of our visit to the park, we help support the "Matobo Rhino Trust Program", which means that extra work is done to protect the horned animals from extinction.

It will be possible for us to leave the car and experience the thick-skinned giants on foot in a fenced area that acts as an intensive protection zone. It is an experience out of the ordinary and compared to sitting in a safari vehicle, it is far more rewarding to meet the animals on their terms, as participants in their world.

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The park is also home to the largest number of leopards in Zimbabwe, but they are very shy, so spotting them requires a little extra luck.

For bird enthusiasts, the park is a bit of a paradise. More than 400 species live here, including the very rare eagles such as the Verraux eagle (also called the black eagle) and the African hawk eagle, and the rare horned owl.

After our game drive, we will go out to visit a small local village, located just outside the park.



The village is inhabited by people from the Ndebele tribe – the same tribe we met in the township of Makokoba. Ndebele make up approx. 15% of the population and is the second-largest tribe after the Shona tribe, which makes up approx. 70% of the population of Zimbabwe.

The Ndebele were historically referred to as Matabele, which in the local language meant "people who protect themselves behind high cowhide shields". The history of the Ndebele began when a group seceded from the Zulu king Shaka. The group was under the leadership of Chief Mzilikazi, who was a former general under Shaka. As a result of the Zulu Kingdom's expansion in the 1820s, Mzilikazi and his tribe fled from the southern part of South Africa towards present-day Lesotho and from there further north to the present-day city of Pretoria. They were displaced by the white Boers in 1837 and therefore continued their flight further north and settled in the later Matabeleland. Here they lived until the British under the leadership of Cecil John Rhodes defeated them in 1893.

Many of the Ndebele people today work on plantations owned by whites or as migrant workers in South Africa. Some, however, seek to maintain their attachment to an existence as farmers in villages such as the one we are about to visit. Each family has a circle of huts around a central cattle pen. The main crop in this subsistence agriculture is maize, while cattle are mostly kept for milk, and are also used as bride prices. The men take care of the cattle, while the women look after the fields. Patriarchal forms with polygamy are still quite widespread. The husband distributes the land among his wives, and the eldest son of the first wife is the main heir. On our tour around, we hear more about life in the village and get a unique insight into a daily life that is so far away from our own.

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After the visit to the village, we will go out to experience the Matobo Hills on foot. The area has one of the highest concentrations of petroglyphs in southern Africa, dating back at least 13,000 years.

The rock carvings illustrate evolving styles and different religious beliefs. It shows that people have interacted with and been inspired by the dramatic rock formations over many thousands of years.

For the local population, Matobo Hills is a sacred place – a place where you can come into contact with the spiritual world. And when you look around, it might be easy to understand why the area is considered Zimbabwe's spiritual home.



On our walk we will visit the burial site of Cecil John Rhodes. Rhodes was originally born in England, but at the age of 17 he went to South Africa at the urging of his doctor, who believed that the dry climate would cure his incipient tuberculosis. When he arrived in the country in 1870, the diamond fever was at its peak, as huge quantities of diamonds had been found in the town of Kimberley. Rhodes therefore became a diamond hunter and eventually gained control of several diamond mines. He founded De Beers, which to this day is still the world's leading diamond company.

His biggest dream, however, was to expand the British Empire and build a railway line from Cairo to Cape Town. But in order for him to realize his dream, the English needed to conquer the last independent kingdom in southern Africa Matabele country, where the Ndebele chieftain Lobengula ruled. At first Rhodes tried to persuade the chief to enter the country. But the chief trusted neither white traders nor missionaries. However, Rhodes succeeded in persuading him by signing a treaty in which Lobengula was promised weapons against the white people gaining access to the country. But the chief was cheated – he never got the promised weapons, and

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instead he and more than 1000 of his men were killed by the white men. Rhodes then founded a colony in the area under the name Rhodesia (present-day Zambia and Zimbabwe).

On one of his trips in the area, Rhodes found the hilltop Malindidzumu ("abode of the benevolent spirits"), which he himself renamed "View of the World". He wrote in his will that he wanted to be buried here, so when he died in Cape Town in 1902, he was brought up here and buried in the presence of the local Matabele chiefs.



Accommodation: Farmhouse Lodge (www.farmhousematopos.com)

Meals: Breakfast and dinner

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Day 6: Matobo Hills – Khami Ruins National Monument – Hwange National Park (*Distance: approx. 325 kilometre*)

After a wonderful night's sleep, we continue our journey to yet another one of the country's wonders - Khami Ruins National Monument - which was added to UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1986. Khami was the capital of the kingdom of Butua from around 1450 until it was destroyed approx. 200 years after.



The area is completely unique and provides unusual evidence of a civilization that has disappeared. The archaeological remains are also a testimony of historical trade relations, and Khami was actually at that time known as the source of gold for Arab and Portuguese merchants in particular. Among the ruins we also find a large granite cross in a sacred spiritual place that illustrates the contact with the missionaries.



After the visit, it is time to drive towards the country's largest national park, Hwange National Park.

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Hwange National Park is one of the best national parks on the African continent and should be on every animal lover's list. With its 15,000 km², this huge reserve is one of Africa's most animal-rich national parks and is famous for its large herds of buffalo and elephant.



The park is located in the north-west of the country and borders Botswana and the dry sands of the Kalahari Desert. The area once belonged to the nomadic San people (Bushmen), who lived off the large herds of big game. In time, however, the San people were displaced by the stronger Ndebele tribe, who's chief Mzilikazi declared the area his hunting ground. When the whites came to the country in the 19th century, they started shooting the big game in their hunt - or rather predatory - for horns, ivory, and animal skins. It took a long time before the authorities noticed the harmful development, and only in 1928 did they declare the then Wankie National Park a reserve.

The reserve was effectively created when the land was considered unsuitable for agriculture with its poor soil and scarce water supply. The first inspector for the area, Ted Davidson, was able to quickly ascertain that there was not much big game left - the number of elephants was below 1000, and the black and white rhinoceros completely extinct. Ted Davidson created 60 artificial waterholes that helped attract wildlife from the Kalahari Desert. In 1949, the reserve became Hwange National Park. The idea was to save the endangered animals - especially the elephants - and at the same time attract tourists on their way to and from Victoria Falls, which was - and still is - Zimbabwe's biggest attraction.

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The biological diversity is enormous with over 100 different kinds of mammals. The park is also home to The Big Five. In addition, there are regular sightings of cheetahs and Africa's largest population of the endangered wild dog. The bird life is at least as rich as the animal life. Over 400 different species of birds live in the park, from the large and not so charming vulture to the beautiful, purple-breasted crow. Even the park's trees are interesting. Both the special Zimbabwe teak tree, the gigantic red mahogany and African ebony grow here.



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In the park we will visit The Painted Dog Conservation. The Painted Dog - or the wild African dog - is about to become extinct. There are fewer than 7,000 left on the entire continent. They may not be as famous as their horned counterparts, but African wild dogs are beautiful, unique, and fascinating social animals.

The wild dogs are native to Africa and are not found in nature anywhere else on the globe. They live in small pockets across a handful of countries, including Zimbabwe. We will experience some of the 700 dogs that live here and hear more about the work the place does to preserve them in the wild.



We spend the night at Hwange Safari Lodge, which is located just outside the park. The rooms have a view of the waterhole or the savannah, so you should not be surprised to see a curious elephant that comes very close to the windows.



Accommodation: Hwange Safari Lodge

<http://www.africansunhotels.com/hotels/8/hwange-safari-lodge>

Meals: Breakfast

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Day 7: Hwange National Park

Today we have to get up early to go on a game drive and experience the animals just after sunrise. We drive around in an open 4-wheel drive, so we have the best conditions for experiencing wildlife.

Hwange today has the country's largest concentration of animals. The elephants in particular have benefited from the protected area and the artificial watering holes that have been constructed. The park today has so many elephants that they almost pose a problem. But they are also the park's biggest attraction.



The national park is a wonderful mix of open savannah, forest, and semi-desert. Such a varied landscape provides living conditions for a number of animals that are not found in many other places in Africa. Among other things, the park is home to the "Big Five Antelopes": eland - the largest of them all; kudu - with the world's longest horn; oryx - whose horn in the Middle Ages was marketed as being from the unicorn; the roan - which is almost extinct, and the sable antelope - with its backward-pointing horns and where the males' skin is jet black.

The many watering holes scattered around the park make it easier to find the animals, and you can sit for hours near watering holes and enjoy the spectacular view. Watchtowers and hiding places have also been built at several waterholes.

We drive around the park until lunchtime. After lunch there is some time to relax before we go on a game drive again in the afternoon.

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Accommodation: Hwange Safari Lodge

<http://www.africansunhotels.com/hotels/8/hwange-safari-lodge>

Meals: Breakfast and lunch

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Day 8: Hwange National Park – Binga – Lake Kariba

(Distance: approx. 184 kilometre)

After breakfast, it is time to continue our journey further northeast as we drive towards Lake Kariba. Lake Kariba is effectively the world's largest artificial reservoir created by a 128-meter high and 617-meter-wide dam across the Zambezi River. The dam was completed in 1959, and the water level rose in the following years, so that the lake was slowly created. The reservoir supplies significant electrical energy to both Zambia and Zimbabwe and supports a thriving fishing sector. Lake Kariba covers an area of 5,580 km² and is 97 meters deep at its deepest point.

The nature around the lake consists of lush grassland with trees and bushes, which is ideal for the many elephants that live in the area. The lake is also home to many hippos and crocodiles, and the large population of fish attracts a large number of birds.

After we have checked into our lodge, we will go out to experience the local people and learn more about the Tonga tribe. We begin by visiting the BaTonga Museum, where we hear more about their history and culture. The Tonga tribe is part of the Bantu people, and can trace their origins back to central Africa, arriving in Zimbabwe around the year 300.

Their ancestors lived around the Zambezi River where they cultivated their crops in the rich soils along the water. They supplemented the crops with hunting the many wild animals and fishing. They were displaced from the banks in connection with the building of the dam. The forced relocation unfortunately resulted in serious socio-economic and cultural challenges for the tribe. By visiting the museum, we help to gain a greater understanding of their traditions and culture, and at the same time help to support the local community.



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After the museum visit, we will go out to have a unique experience when we visit one of the local villages and a local school.



The school has students aged 3-24 divided into Early Childhood Development (2 years), Primary School (7 years of schooling) and Secondary School (4-6 years of schooling).

At the school, students are taught mathematics, English, local language, social studies, chemistry, physics, agriculture, IT, and sports. The school classes are larger than you know back home in Denmark, and there can easily be up to 50 students in a class. Discipline is paramount, so all students wear uniforms and will always stand up when we enter the classroom. We eat lunch in the company of the teachers, where we can exchange experiences with the school system in other countries.

After an eventful day it is time to return to our lodge for the next 2 nights. We spend the night at Masumu River Lodge, which is located on the riverbank with the most beautiful view of Lake Kariba.



Accommodation: Masumu River Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner

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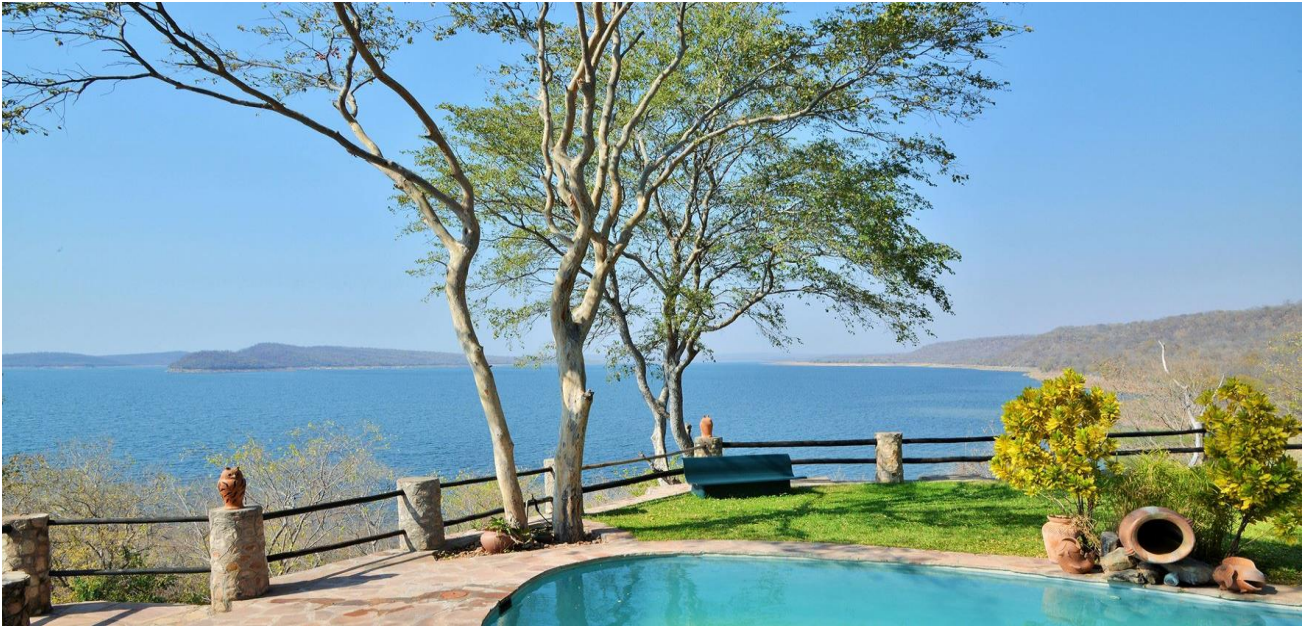


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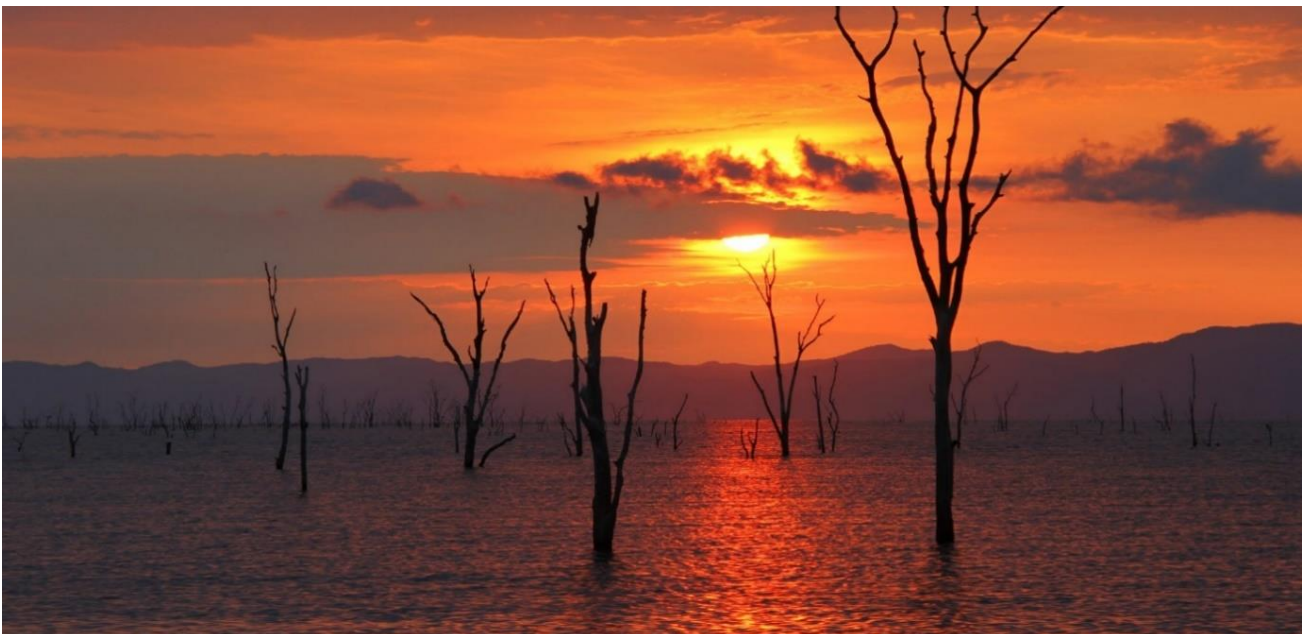
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Day 9: Lake Kariba

The day is at your disposal until the afternoon and can be used to relax by the swimming pool or explore the area on your own.



After lunch, it's time to get ready for the afternoon and evening experience. No trip to Africa is complete until you have experienced the very special African sunset, where the sky is lit up in the most fantastic burnt orange-red colours. At the same time, many animals are active at sunset and in the twilight, so you may be lucky enough to see hippos, crocodiles, and elephants, while at the same time you can keep an eye out for the rich birdlife in the treetops and in the sky.



Accommodation: Masumu River Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner

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Day 10: Binga – Victoria Falls

(Distance: approx. 312 kilometre)

After breakfast, it's time to drive to the next highlight of the journey – Victoria Falls. When talk falls on Victoria Falls, 2 things often come to mind: Of course, the world-famous waterfall, and then the almost equally legendary hotel Victoria Falls Hotel. Built by the British in 1904, the hotel was originally intended as accommodation for the workers who worked on the railway from Cape Town to Cairo. As part of the railway system, a bridge was to be built over the mighty Zambezi River. Cecil Rhodes, who could see that this railway would strengthen the British Empire, wanted the bridge to be built in a place where the water spray from the waterfall would fall on the passing trains, which is the reason why the bridge is so close to the waterfall.



The Victoria Falls Hotel has been modernized over the years but has retained the distinctive colonial style that makes us almost feel like we are in a time warp when we walk around the hotel. Here we will have their famous High Tea with a view of the Victoria Falls Bridge.



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We spend the night at the 4-star hotel Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, which has been voted the best safari lodge in Zimbabwe for 11 years in a row. The lodge has a perfect location on a natural plateau overlooking the Zambezi National Park and a water hole where the wild animals come to drink.

Finally, be sure to visit the Buffalo Bar, which offers a fantastic view of the park and has been named one of Heineken's "Great Bars of the World".



Accommodation: Victoria Falls Safari Lodge (<https://victoria-falls-safari-lodge.com/>)

Meals: Breakfast and High Tea

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Day 11: Victoria Falls

After a delicious breakfast, it's time to drive towards the impressive Victoria Falls, which was added to UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1989.

Before we get to the waterfall, we make a stop at the big Baobab tree, which is probably both the oldest and largest Baobab tree in Zimbabwe. The tree is estimated to be at least 2000 years old and has an impressive girth and height – 22.40 meters in circumference and 24 meters high. A traditional legend tells how the baobab tree got its appearance:

"God gave each animal a tree to plant, but the hyena had not been given a tree. God said to the hyena: "Here you have a seed, you must plant it, then you will also have a tree". The hyena was not particularly clever, so when it had to plant the seed, it turned it upside down. Therefore, it looks as if the baobab tree has its roots in the air and its crown in the ground."



Many call it the tree of life, as it grows so slowly that it takes 1000 years to reach its full size. Over time, the tree is hollowed out and therefore it has been used as both housing, as a prison and to bury important villagers. For that reason, there are many locals who believe that you can get in touch with your ancestors via the tree.

One of the tree's peculiarities is that it absorbs large amounts of water during the rainy season. It can hold up to 4500 litres of water inside its trunk during the dry season, which is why elephants go in search of water under the bark when lakes and streams dry up.

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From there we continue the journey to Africa's largest and the world's second largest waterfall Victoria Falls on the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia. It is one of the natural wonders of the world and with its width of 1.7 km and a drop of 128 meters is very spectacular. It was the English explorer David Livingstone who, as the first white man on 17 November 1855, "discovered" the waterfall and named it in honour of the then English Queen Victoria.

The indigenous people from the Tonga tribe called the waterfall Mosi-oa-Tunya, which directly translates to "the smoke that thunders". A very telling name, as especially in the rainy season it sounds like a strong thunder from the gorge, when the water masses hit the bottom and throw up a cloud of water up to 400 meters high. The Tonga tribe believed that the thunder and the huge flood were caused by evil spirits. They believed in the river god Nyaminyami who lived under a large rock further up the Victoria Falls. The mythical creature was a mixture of a fish and a snake and has been hiding since the white man arrived in the area. When it appears, the water turns red. No one dares to get too close to its rock as legend has it that the men who sailed there in their canoes disappeared and have never been seen again. Whether you believe these myths or not, they are still quite fascinating. Today you will discover the magic for yourself...



After we have enjoyed the guided tour around the waterfall, heard a little more about the geological wonder and the legends that surround it, the rest of the afternoon is at your disposal. There is an opportunity to go sightseeing in the city and buy a few souvenirs to take home.

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We will meet again at 19.00, where we will have our farewell dinner at The Boma restaurant. We sit overlooking the Zimbabwean night sky and enjoy various excellent local dishes. While we eat, we are entertained by traditional dance and music.



With the inciting African rhythms present in consciousness, it's time to get back to the hotel and get a good night's sleep.

Accommodation: Victoria Falls Safari Lodge (<https://victoria-falls-safari-lodge.com/>)

Meals: Breakfast and dinner

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Day 12: Departure to Denmark

Enjoy the last morning atmosphere in Zimbabwe. Take a dip in the hotel swimming pool or buy the last souvenirs before we get ready to go to Victoria Falls Airport to begin our journey home to Denmark. Tired, but filled with lots of lovely holiday memories, new friendships and, of course, unique spot shots.



Meals: Breakfast

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Overview of the itinerary

- a World of Wonders

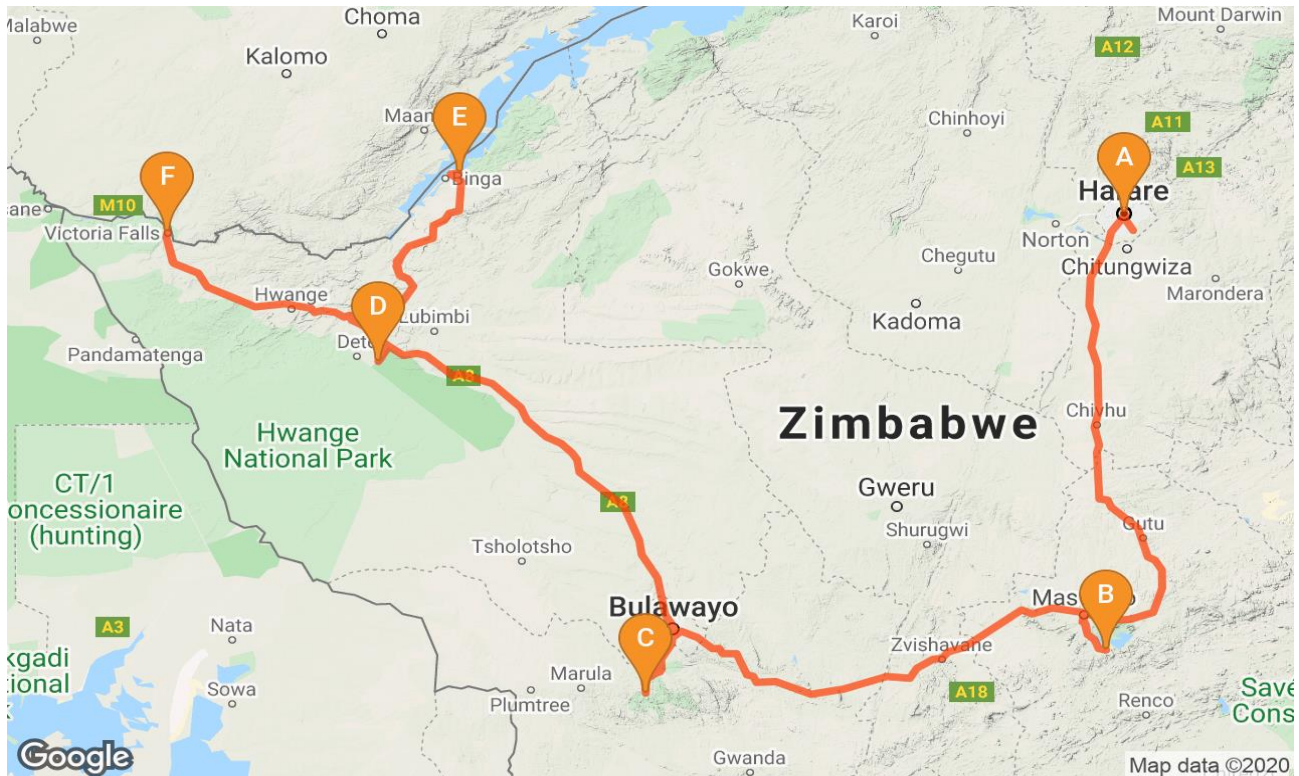
Day	Duration	Accommodation	Meals
1 - 3	2 nights	The Queensgate Hotel, Harare	Dag 2 Breakfast
3 - 4	1 night	Lodge at the Ancient City	Dag 3 Breakfast & Dinner
4 - 6	2 nights	Farmhouse Lodge	Dag 4 Breakfast & Dinner Dag 5 Breakfast & Dinner
6 - 8	2 nights	Hwange Safari Lodge	Dag 6 Breakfast Dag 7 Breakfast & Lunch
8 - 10	2 nights	Masumu River Lodge, Binga	Dag 8 Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner Dag 9 Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
10 - 12	2 nights	Victoria Falls Safari Lodge	Dag 10 Breakfast & High Tea Dag 11 Breakfast & Dinner
12			Dag 12 Breakfast



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Sensational Zimbabwe - *a World of Wonders*



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Practical information - *a World of Wonders*

Travel budget

Most meals on our trip are already included. For drinks and additional lunches or dinners, calculate around DKK 150-200 per person.

Tips

It is customary to tip guides, waiters, and other service personnel. They receive a very small, fixed salary, and are therefore very dependent on the tips they receive when they deliver a good effort. Evergreen Escape Expeditions recognizes this custom, but also knows that Danes generally have a hard time tipping, as we are not used to it. That is why we have included tips for guides and drivers in the journey.

It is often a large item on a travel budget. Guests of Evergreen Escape Expeditions avoid this post and the considerations associated with it. Gratuities for both local guides and general guides, drivers and helpers are included in the price for the journey.

What remains are the small items such as tips for maids and porters. Most often, their salary is based on tips. We cannot change this. Therefore, it is always a good idea to show your appreciation in the form of a small amount, both to the dragon who takes the suitcase from the room to the lobby, and to the house cleaner in charge of the room.

Likewise, Evergreen Escape Expeditions recommends that you round up - or add 10% - when paying at a restaurant. The same rule applies here as in hotels: the salary is based on the guests tipping.

Passport

Passport must be valid for six months beyond the date of entry and have 2 blank pages for entry and exit stamps.

It is always a good idea to have an extra copy of the passport's information page with you. It is kept in a different place than the passport itself.

We advise all travellers to check with the country's consulate about possible changes regarding entry requirements, as these can change at short notice.

Visa

Visa is required for EU citizens in Zimbabwe. The visa can be purchased at the border crossing and currently costs USD 30. It is valid for one month. Remember to bring exact amount.

Vehicles

We use air-conditioned vehicles.

From 8 to 14 people, we travel with a 17-person Crafter or a Mercedes Sprinter. These vehicles are very agile, flexible, and reliable.

For more than 14 people, we travel with a 24-person bus.

When we are on a game drive in Matobo National Park and Hwange National Park, we drive in open terrain 4-wheel drive vehicles.

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Luggage

Please bring a soft bag or rucksack rather than a suitcase, as they are often easier to pack in the car.

Packing List

Documents:

- Your passport & a copy of the passport (keep it separate from the original)
- Your flight confirmation
- Vaccination certificate & copy
- Contact details and insurance card for your international health insurance
- Cash in Euro or USD
- Credit card, preferably Visa
- Last travel documents with the contact details of the contact person on site

Clothing:

- Sturdy shoes
- Sandals
- Warm fleece or wool sweater for chilly mornings and evenings
- Light summer clothes
- Long-sleeved shirt/blouse and long cotton trousers
- Light rain/wind jacket
- Headgear
- Swimwear, bath towel and bath shoes

Equipment:

- Small backpack
- Money belt or chest bag for storing money and valuables
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight + extra batteries
- Headlamp
- Camera and possibly telephoto lens for animal photos
- Memory card
- Binoculars
- Power adapter
- Travel alarm clock
- Travel hair dryer if needed
- Neck pillow for travel and long journeys

Health/First Aid Kit:

- Sunscreen for skin and lips
- Mosquito spray (mosquito spray can also be bought on arrival - e.g., Nobite or Medisoft)
- First aid kit (with plasters and disinfectant)
- Important personal medicine
- Small provisions, e.g., biscuit
- A roll of toilet paper

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