

Yedulani

TRAVEL MAGAZINE

ISSUE 010/2026

BEYOND BORDERS

A REGION GREATER THAN THE SUM
OF ITS DESTINATIONS.

ONE REGION.
MANY DESTINATIONS.
ONE JOURNEY.



INVESTING IN ZIMBABWE
THE OPPORTUNITIES SHAPING
TOURISM'S NEXT CHAPTER



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EXPERIENCE, AUTHENTICITY
AND THE CHANGING HOSPITALITY
TRAVELLER



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WHEN NATURE CHANGES
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Industry Update

Hon. Barbara Rwodzi Crowned Africa's
Tourism Minister of the Year —

Update 001

Hon. Barbara Rwodzi

Crowned Africa's Tourism
Minister of the Year

The global travel community has highly lauded Zimbabwe's minister for her immense institutional contributions. Tourism Minister Hon. Barbara Rwodzi won the prestigious 'Africa's Tourism Minister of the Year' title at the ITB Berlin PATWA International Travel Awards. This exceptional global accolade honors her visionary deployment of the country's strategic 13-cluster tourism development model, which successfully decentralized destination marketing right to community nodes. Her remarkable leadership was further validated internationally by her high-profile appointment as the Vice President of the UN Tourism General Assembly, firmly cementing Zimbabwe's active role in shaping world hospitality policies.



Update 002

'Natural Wonders'

Destination Zimbabwe Named
'Natural Wonders' World Champion

The incredible natural asset portfolio of Zimbabwe has taken center stage globally by clinching top prestige honors on the international stage. At the Pacific Area Travel Writers Association (PATWA) International Travel Awards held at ITB Berlin, the country was formally awarded 'Destination of the Year – Natural Wonders.' Celebrating the magnificent pristine landscapes stretching from the mist-shrouded peaks of Nyanga to the untamed wilderness of Hwange and Mana Pools, this highly acclaimed global recognition gives local operators an elite marketing edge when engaging corporate long-haul travel planners.

Update 003

Southern Africa Dominece

Southern Africa Dominates
Responsible Tourism Awards

Regional travel operators have taken center stage globally by winning top honors at the WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Awards. Zimbabwe's pioneering Ele Collection secured Gold for 'Nature Positive' tourism, celebrating its elite eco-luxury hospitality models that merge luxury safaris with deep wilderness conservation. Simultaneously, Namibia's community-led RuralRevive project won Gold for 'Regenerative Tourism,' and South Africa's Table Mountain Aerial Cableway took home Gold for 'Local Economic Benefit.' These prestigious awards prove that Southern Africa is the global gold standard for ethical, sustainable travel.

Update 004

US\$678 Million Capital Surge

US\$678 Million Capital Surge Drives
Zimbabwe's Hospitality Real Estate

Investor confidence in Zimbabwe's tourism infrastructure has shattered historical milestones. Official data from the African Travel and Tourism Association (ATTA®) reveals that tourism investment in Zimbabwe surged to an unprecedented US\$678 million in early 2026. This represents a staggering 438% year-on-year increase in tourism-specific capital expenditure. As highlighted at the premier ZimReal Property Investment Forum, this massive financial influx is being anchored by domestic institutional pension funds and private developers utilizing specialized Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs). Instead of speculative projects, this capital is funding immediate, high-end commercial, wellness, and safari lodge constructions across the nation, signaling a highly lucrative future for the local hospitality supply chain.

Update 003

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Update 004

Grand Hyatt Victoria Falls

Grand Hyatt Victoria Falls
The Kingdom Real Estate Takeover

The global luxury market has placed a massive vote of confidence in Zimbabwe. Hyatt Hotels Corporation signed a milestone management agreement with Albwardy Investments LLC to debut Grand Hyatt Victoria Falls The Kingdom. This landmark deal will completely transform the iconic 1966 property into a 245-room ultra-luxury resort set to open in late 2027. Coming on the heels of the successful launch of Hyatt Regency Harare The Meikles, this multi-million-dollar project solidifies Zimbabwe's status as a premier destination for high-end international travelers.



Update 005

Fastjet Spreads Its Wings

Fastjet Spreads Its Wings Across Zimbabwe and Regional Routes



Intra-African travel has reached new heights thanks to the continuous expansion of Fastjet. The airline has significantly increased flight frequencies on key tourism and trade routes connecting Harare, Victoria Falls, Bulawayo, and Johannesburg. By upgrading its fleet and enhancing its digital booking systems, Fastjet provides the reliable, premium value-driven backbone that business and leisure travelers need. This seamless connectivity makes it easier than ever for international buyers to package multi-destination itineraries across Zimbabwe.

Update 004

SADC Tourism UNIVISA

SADC Tourism UNIVISA Accord
Legally Dissolves Regional Borders

In a historic breakthrough for regional integration, Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State signed a legally binding agreement establishing the SADC Tourism UNIVISA. Moving past years of policy deliberations, member nations have finalized unified digital IT frameworks and cross-border revenue-sharing models. A single-visa pilot phase is rolling out across Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Angola, and Mozambique. Tourism ministers have ordered the immediate harmonization of immigration systems to facilitate frictionless travel. For international tour operators at WTM London, this structural reform eliminates major multi-country booking barriers, making seamless Southern African itineraries as easy to package as a single European flight.

Update 006

Cricket World Cup 2027

Cricket World Cup 2027 Drives Zimbabwe Infrastructure Boom

The country is preparing for an unprecedented sports tourism surge following the official venue announcement for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027. Co-hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, the tournament will feature 12 world-class venues. In Zimbabwe, construction on the state-of-the-art Mosi-oa-Tunya International Cricket Stadium in Victoria Falls is nearing structural completion. This mega-event is projected to fill local hotels to maximum capacity and create thousands of hospitality jobs across the nation.

Update 004

Qatar Airways Injects Global Capital

Qatar Airways Injects Global Capital Into Airlink Network

Southern Africa's aviation sector received a massive boost after Qatar Airways acquired a 25% stake in Airlink. This strategic partnership bridges the gap between global networks and regional African hubs. Alongside this investment, Qatar Airways has increased its own frequency to 42 weekly flights into South Africa, connecting Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban directly to Doha. This enhanced connectivity ensures a steady flow of high-spending long-haul travelers into the wider Southern African ecosystem.



Update 006

Green Tourism Technology Wins

Green Tourism Technology Wins Global Acclaim at Sustainability Showcases

The intersection of technology and wildlife conservation has earned Southern African innovators top honors on the world stage. At the WTM Africa Sustainability Showcases, newly deployed AI-driven anti-poaching tech and community-led carbon credit models received global acclaim. By linking high-end tourism spend directly to data-backed conservation and rural community equity, projects across Eswatini, Namibia, and Zimbabwe have successfully caught the attention of premium European buyers. This tech-driven edge positions the region as the preferred choice for eco-conscious global travelers heading into next year.

Editors Note

The Journey is the Destination

Tourism has always sold places. Increasingly, the opportunity lies in selling **connections**.

A traveller standing at Victoria Falls is within reach of Botswana, Zambia and Namibia. Wildlife crosses these borders without ceremony; culture, cuisine and history have never respected the neat lines on our maps. Yet too often, we continue to package Southern Africa as a collection of separate destinations rather than one extraordinary journey.

That tension sits at the heart of this edition of Yedu Lani.

As Sangana/Hlanganani/Dzimbahwe moves to Masvingo for its 19th edition, placing international tourism conversations in the shadow of Great Zimbabwe, the symbolism is difficult to miss. We are being reminded that looking forward does not require abandoning where we come from.

Across these pages, we explore a tourism economy being reshaped by artificial intelligence, climate realities, investment, changing definitions of luxury and, importantly, the case for a more connected Southern Africa. The question is no longer simply **what do we have to show the world?** It is whether we are making it easy enough for the world to experience it.

Perhaps the future of African tourism will not be won by the destination with the loudest campaign, but by the region intelligent enough to connect the dots.

Welcome to the journey.

Godknows Homwe
Editor, Yedu Lani Travel

Our Partners



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INDABA 2026 — BY THE NUMBERS

9,800 delegates from across the globe
1,225+ exhibitors from 22 African countries
1,000 buyers representing 44 countries
18 airlines at the expanded aviation pavilion
191 micro and small businesses showcased

AFRICA'S TRAVEL INDABA 2026 Trade Floor Opening



Unlimited Africa

Travel Indaba 2026 Charts a Collaborative
Future for African Tourism
By Bokani King

Unlimited Africa

For four days in May, Durban became the beating heart of African tourism. Industry leaders, governments, investors, travel buyers, media and entrepreneurs gathered at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre for Africa's Travel Indaba 2026, a continent convening to tell its own story, on its own terms. The numbers speak to the scale of ambition: 9800 delegates, over 1,225 exhibitors and 1,000 buyers from 44 countries united in a shared conviction that Africa's greatest chapter is still being written.

Held under the theme "Unlimited Africa: Growing Africa's Tourism Economy," this year's edition carried a singular declaration: African tourism is no longer shaped by recovery. It is defined by momentum. Twenty-two African countries filled the exhibition halls — their stands vibrating with cultural performances, culinary journeys, conservation stories and travel innovations that reminded every delegate why Africa endures as a destination unlike any other.

While wildlife, culture and hospitality remain the continent's most intoxicating selling points, the conversations that mattered most centred on something equally vital: how African nations can architect a future of collective prosperity rather than compete as isolated destinations for the same traveller. From aviation connectivity and destination marketing to digital storytelling, sports tourism and policy reform, one conviction resounded across every forum and corridor, Africa's rise as a global tourism powerhouse depends on its willingness to rise as one.

"Tourism is more than a sector of the economy. It is a living expression of who we are as a people." **President Cyril Ramaphosa**



"For many African countries, tourism is not merely a leisure industry. It is a developmental instrument through which we can grow our economies," President Cyril Ramaphosa told delegates in his opening address. He urged African nations to transcend the instinct of competition, calling instead for a continental posture that presents Africa as a single, magnificent destination, where a traveller does not merely visit a country, but discovers a world. "When Africans travel within Africa," he declared, "we strengthen our economies, deepen our cultural ties and build a more integrated continent." Improved air connectivity, stronger regional partnerships and the expansion of the SADC Tourism UNIVISA, he argued, are imperatives, not aspirations. His confidence was unapologetic: "Africa is not waiting. Africa is leading." South African Tourism's General Manager for Global PR, Communications and Stakeholder Relations, Thandiwe Mathibela, offered evidence that cooperation is already materialising.

SAT is expanding its continental trade show presence while deepening bilateral partnerships, a trajectory that culminated at Indaba itself in the signing of a landmark Memorandum of Understanding between South Africa and Mauritius, formalising collaboration on air connectivity, skills development and regional travel. Angola and Lesotho are deepening ties too, signalling that Africa's tourism map is broadening with intent and purpose.

Beyond policy platforms and boardrooms, Indaba 2026 was a celebration of Africa's extraordinary soul. Exhibition halls breathed with colour, sound and flavour — traditional performances, community tourism showcases, conservation exhibits and culinary encounters reminding every visitor that the continent's diversity is not a complexity to be managed. It is a competitive advantage to be celebrated. Digital storytelling featured prominently throughout, with tourism leaders acknowledging that authentic African narratives, told by Africans, on their own terms, are reshaping global perceptions and drawing a new generation of travellers seeking immersion over spectacle.

Tourism remains one of the world's great economic engines. According to the World Bank, the industry supported approximately 357 million jobs globally in 2024, roughly one in every ten workers on earth. South Africa alone welcomed 10.5 million international visitors in 2025, with three-quarters arriving from within the SADC region. Across Africa, delegates converged on a single conviction: tourism is not merely an economic sector. It is a sovereign instrument, capable of lifting communities, protecting ecosystems and building legacies that endure.

"Africa is not waiting. Africa is leading."
— **President Cyril Ramaphosa**



As Africa's Travel Indaba marked more than four decades of connecting the continent to global markets, its 2026 edition made one truth inescapable: the era of potential is over. What stands before Africa now is the era of execution.

The continent has the will. It has the world's attention. The challenge now is ensuring that improved connectivity, stronger regional partnerships and shared storytelling translate into tangible, lasting opportunity for communities across Africa. From what was on display in Durban this May, the momentum is unmistakable — and it belongs to Africa.

WELCOME DURBAN



Borderless Tourism

Why Southern Africa Must Sell Journeys,
Not Just Destinations



Stand at the confluence of the Zambezi and Chobe rivers at Kasane. In a single glance, you take in four countries, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Namibia. Below the surface, hippos move between jurisdictions with no visa required. Above, a carmine bee eater trace a parabola that begins in one national park and ends in another. Only the human beings who built this infrastructure are constrained by which flag flies on their particular riverbank.

This is Southern Africa's greatest tourism paradox: a region that nature designed as a continuous, interconnected stage has been marketed as a collection of competing acts. Botswana sells the Okavango. Zimbabwe sells Victoria Falls. Zambia offers the Luangwa Valley. South Africa leads with Kruger. Each is magnificent. None is the whole story. And selling the parts at the expense of the whole may be the region's most costly strategic mistake.

The Scale Of The Opportunity

The numbers are too significant to dismiss. Southern Africa's travel and tourism sector generated an estimated USD 56 billion in economic contribution in 2025, according to WTTC and Statista modelling. By 2040, that figure is forecast to reach USD 132 billion, more than doubling over fifteen years.

The region attracts 15.3 million international visitors annually, and tourism's share of regional GDP is projected to reach 9.88% by 2028.

These are not the numbers of a market on the margins. This is one of the world's most significant emerging tourism economies, and it is growing at precisely the moment when global travellers are seeking deeper, slower, more experiential journeys. Southern Africa, with its extraordinary ecological continuity, sits perfectly positioned to capture that shift.

"A USD 56 billion sector growing to **USD 132 billion** by 2040, and it is still being marketed as a collection of separate, competing destinations."



But capture requires more than geography. It requires a unified sales proposition.

TOURISM WITHOUT BORDERS

— Unlocking Shared Prosperity —
Across Southern Africa

Tourism connects people, powers economies
and creates opportunities that cross borders.



SOUTHERN AFRICA TOURISM SNAPSHOT 2025 ESTIMATES & 2028 FORECASTS

COUNTRY	TOURISM GDP (2025 EST.)	GDP SHARE (2028 FORECAST)	INT'L ARRIVALS	2025F GROWTH RATE
South Africa	USD 45.36 bn	9.07%	10.2 million (modelled)	+4.9%
Zimbabwe	USD 8.22 bn	—	1.03 million	+16.5%
Zambia	USD 5.65 bn	8.21%	—	+12.2%
Botswana	USD 3.83 bn	13.08% ★ ★ HIGHEST	—	+4.6%
Namibia	—	6.9% (2022)	863,872 (+87.4%)	—
Mozambique	—	4.02% (2023)	—	—

ONE REGION. MANY DESTINATIONS.
Stronger together through borderless tourism.

Data highlights the growing
contribution of tourism to
economies and the strong recovery
in international arrivals
across the region.

Source: WTTC Economic
Impact Research (2025)
UN Tourism (2024) &
National Tourism Boards

★ Highest GDP share
(2028 forecast)

— Data not
available

F = Forecast

% change in international
arrivals (where available)

South Africa remains the anchor. Travel and tourism generated USD 45.36 billion for South Africa's economy in 2025, representing approximately 6.4% of GDP in the 2019 baseline year, a share WTTC forecasts will grow to 9.07% by 2028.

Botswana is arguably the most remarkable story. Despite its relatively small economy, travel and tourism is projected to account for 13.08% of GDP by 2028, the highest share of any country in the region. This reflects the premium, high-value, low-volume model that the Okavango ecosystem demands and rewards. In 2023, travel and tourism's total contribution reached P32.8 billion (12.1% of GDP), supporting over 100,000 jobs.

Zimbabwe is in accelerating recovery. Following a 52.7% pandemic crash, the sector posted 28.2% growth in 2023 and is forecast to expand at 16.5% in 2025 — the fastest recovery trajectory in the region.

Zambia's tourism sector contributed 7% of GDP (USD 1.7 billion) in 2019, with international visitor spending representing 10% of total exports [9].

In 2025, the sector's estimated economic contribution stands at USD 5.65 billion, with a 12.2% growth rate forecast.

COVID Shock & Recovery:

The regional sector contracted 57.7% in 2020 before staging a 56.5% rebound in 2022 and sustaining 26.9% growth in 2023. The resilience of the recovery demonstrates the structural demand beneath the sector's volatility and the urgency of building a more integrated, durable offer.



The Investor Case: What The Data Shows

The economic argument for selling journeys over destinations goes beyond aesthetics. The data on multi-country travel spending is unambiguous.

Multi-province and multi-country travellers in Southern Africa stay, on average, 20 days, compared to 2–3 days for the typical SADC regional visitor, and spend nearly three times more than those visiting a single destination. Overseas tourists already stay 8–14 days; the opportunity is to extend and enrich that stay across borders.

The KAZA Univisa, a joint visa granting multiple entries between Zambia and Zimbabwe, with day-trip access to Botswana, is a structural enabler that has barely reached its commercial potential. Livingstone hotels posted 70% average occupancy in 2023, against a 55% national average and a pre-2023 benchmark of 40% — evidence that the Victoria Falls corridor, when marketed as a cross border destination, generates premium demand.

SADC UniVisa Horizon:

The SADC Tourism Programme 2020–2030 targets a region-wide UNIVISA framework, recognising that visa friction is one of the primary barriers to multi-country itineraries. The KAZA Univisa is the proof of concept.



Learning From The World's Great Cross-border Routes

The business case is not without precedent. Three global examples are instructive.

Route/Region: Camino de Santiago (Spain)

Annual Visitors: 530,919 pilgrims (2025)

Economic Impact: €500M+ / year in Galicia

Key Lesson for S. Africa: Each pilgrim = 2.3x national tourist. Journey is the product, not the city.

Route/Region: The Danube Region (10 countries)

Annual Visitors: 120 million annually

Economic Impact: One of Europe's leading cruise + river destinations

Key Lesson for S. Africa: Cross-border narrative creates a product no single nation could sell.

Route/Region: The Alps (7 countries, EUSALP)

Annual Visitors: Switzerland: 42.8M overnights (2024 record)

Economic Impact: Austria: 71.1M winter overnights (2023/24)

Key Lesson for S. Africa: Shared zone identity outperforms individual national marketing by an order of magnitude.

Southern Africa's ecology dwarfs all three in scale and biodiversity. The KAZA conservation area alone is nearly twelve times the size of Switzerland. Yet it generates a fraction of the organised visitor economy that the Alps produce. The infrastructure gap is real, but the opportunity is proportionally enormous.

The Infrastructure Imperative

Realising the borderless tourism vision demands investment in connective tissue. Air connectivity is the most critical variable.

Victoria Falls International Airport has posted growth of 20–30% annually since 2022, handling an estimated 20% of Zimbabwe's air passenger traffic, approximately 70–80% of those passengers are international. But direct international routing to KAZA nodes, Victoria Falls, Kasane, Livingstone, remains limited compared to Johannesburg and Cape Town

The potential of secondary hubs that is Maun, Ndola, Bulawayo, as connective nodes for multi-country itineraries is largely untapped. The Kazungula Bridge, the world's first road-and-rail bridge linking Botswana and Zambia (opened 2021), is a model of what intentional infrastructure for borderless tourism looks like. It should not be the last.

A Proposition For Investors And Tourism Leaders

The case is not theoretical. Southern Africa already holds:

- The world's largest land-based transfrontier conservation area (KAZA TFCA, 516,406 km²)
- The planet's greatest concentration of savanna elephants – 227,900 across five nations
- Six tourism economies collectively approaching USD 60 billion in annual contribution
- 15.3 million international visitors a year – and a forecast doubling of sector GDP by 2040
- An emerging cross-border visa framework with commercial traction

What the region lacks is the unified narrative, the joint product, and the shared marketing infrastructure to capture the premium value of what the landscape already offers.

My Take

The data is unambiguous: the region has the assets, the recovery momentum, and the biological case for a cross-border tourism proposition that could anchor the next decade of growth. The constraint is not product, it is positioning. Individual destination marketing is rational for national tourism boards, but it is leaving significant value on the table. The investor or operator who builds genuinely integrated, multi-country Southern African itineraries, with coherent booking, consistent visa support, and a shared narrative, is not filling a niche. They are defining a category.

"The Camino is just a walk. The Danube is just a river. Southern Africa is a continent-scale wildlife stage. The only question is whether the region will sell it as one."



Shared Tourism Future

Voices from Botswana and South Africa on where regional tourism goes next



Deputy Minister of Tourism Makhotsi Magdeline Sotyu.

"The movement of people across our region remains more difficult, expensive, and fragmented than it should be," she told a high-level SADC Dialogue — naming the contradiction that haunts African tourism with unflinching directness. Why does flying between two African capitals so often cost more than a transatlantic ticket? "Too many routes remain underserved.

Too many travellers face costly and complicated journeys. Her prescription was clear: harmonised aviation policies, bolder regional thinking, and the recognition that "the visitor experience does not begin at the hotel. It begins at the border."

"When Southern Africa connects, Southern Africa rises — together, stronger, and more competitive."
— Deputy Minister Makhotsi Magdeline Sotyu



Round Table – Botswana Ceo Responding

1. Many destinations measure success by visitor numbers. Botswana has often championed value over volume, what can the rest of southern Africa learn from that philosophy?

Botswana's value-over-volume approach shows that tourism success should not be measured by visitor numbers alone, but by the quality and sustainability of the value created for destinations, communities, conservation and the economy.

For Southern Africa, this means attracting visitors who stay longer, spend more and travel responsibly, while ensuring tourism delivers tangible benefits to local communities. It also means working together to promote the region as a connected destination, encouraging longer stays and greater regional spend.

Ultimately, we should pursue growth that protects the natural and cultural assets on which our tourism depends.

2. Looking ahead to 2035 what should southern Africa protect at all cost as it grows its visitor economy?

By 2035, Southern Africa must protect the natural and cultural assets that underpin our tourism industry, our wildlife, ecosystems, landscapes, heritage and cultural identity.

Growth must be responsible, climate-conscious and inclusive, ensuring that local communities are both custodians and beneficiaries of tourism. As we embrace infrastructure, technology and new experiences, we must also protect the authenticity and character of our destinations.

Our success should be measured by a visitor economy that creates jobs and investment while leaving our environment, communities and heritage stronger for future generations.



"Botswana's value-over-volume approach shows that tourism success should be measured by the quality and sustainability of the value created for destinations, communities, conservation and the economy."

Acting CEO Botswana Tourism Organisation
Justice Ofentse





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Redefining African Luxury

Your Personal Host: How Chipo Mandela is Reshaping Premium Travel

"I had a dream, and it is this dream that I am fulfilling today through Liam Collection."



In a rapidly evolving global hospitality landscape, where experience, authenticity, and purpose define success, few African leaders are shaping the narrative with as much clarity and conviction as Commissioner Chipo Mandela.

From leading established hotel brands to founding The Liam Collection, Comm. Mandela represents a new generation of African hospitality entrepreneurs: those not only building premium properties, but curating

immersive, culturally grounded, and globally competitive experiences.

With a growing footprint across Harare, Victoria Falls, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, and Mauritius, her journey reflects more than expansion. It signals a strategic repositioning of African luxury for the global traveller and investor.

In this exclusive conversation with Yedu Lani Travel, we

"I had a dream, and it is this dream that I am fulfilling today through Liam Collection."



explore the future of hospitality, investment opportunities in Africa, and the power of purpose-driven leadership.

"I HAD A DREAM"

Commissioner Mandela's story is not one of corporate escape, it is the deliberate pursuit of something the international hotel industry, for all its scale, has never quite managed to deliver: you.

"I had a dream, and it is this dream that I am fulfilling today through Liam Collection."

Having spent years navigating the layers of bureaucracy that define large-brand hospitality, Mandela grew increasingly convinced that the industry's most valuable currency had shifted away from thread counts and lobby grandeur, toward something far more personal. "Guests are now paying for feeling, not just rooms," she explains. "Personalisation and human touch are now very key. Guests are demanding staff who anticipate needs, not just follow standard operating procedures."

The result is The Liam Collection; a portfolio of boutique properties built around one deceptively simple promise: Your Personal Host. In a post-COVID world where travellers consistently favour smaller crowds, faster problem-solving, and direct access to decision-makers, Mandela's model is precisely calibrated to the moment. Corporate clients, NGOs, and leisure guests all share the

same advantage: less red tape, more Chipso.

For diaspora travellers returning to Zimbabwe, from South Africa, the UK, or the United States, expecting boutique standards and genuinely personalised service, the proposition is equally compelling. And for buyers at Sangani/Hlangani Tourism Expo and WTM London, it offers something international chains rarely can: the founder as the guarantee.

THE RESET: WHAT TRAVEL LOOKS LIKE NOW

The global hospitality industry is mid-reset. Post-COVID, post-AI, and mid-cost-of-living crisis, travellers are no longer simply booking accommodation, they are making deliberate choices about meaning.

"Guests don't book rooms. They book memories and meaning." Mandela identifies five shifts reshaping Africa's travel landscape. First: the rise of experiential travel, culinary journeys, heritage stays, and safari-community tourism packages built around cultural depth. Second, hyper-personalisation is erasing the era of five hundred identical rooms. Third, wellness and "bleisure" travel, the blending of business and leisure, is creating demand for extended stays combining fast WiFi, excellent food, and community. Fourth, food has become the primary destination driver: "We have seen a sharp increase in gastronomy tourism in Zimbabwe to the extent that people travel for the restaurant, then stay the night," Mandela notes.

And fifth, intra-Africa and diaspora travel is booming. MICE clients are actively moving away from large, anonymous conference venues toward intimate boutique





VICTORIA FALLS

SAFARI COLLECTION

the finest hospitality collection in Victoria Falls



The Victoria Falls Safari Collection is a portfolio of properties renowned for capturing the very essence of Africa in one of the region's most iconic destinations - Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. The collection incorporates the flagship Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, the premium Victoria Falls Safari Club, the spacious Victoria Falls Safari Suites, the family-friendly Lokuthula Lodges, the 'must-do' Boma - Dinner & Drum Show, the rejuvenating Victoria Falls Safari Spa and Queen Nandi Place, a state-of-the-art events venue.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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Dinner & Drum Show

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Safari Spa



Before the opportunity becomes obvious

ZIDA on corridors, capital, and the country's next investment frontier —



ZIDA
ZIMBABWE
INVESTMENT &
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

Unearthing Potential!

ZIDA positions Zimbabwe as an SADC gateway, not an isolated market. Which concrete regional investment corridor, energy, logistics, or tourism, is closest to producing a bankable cross-border deal, and which regional agency is your strongest ally in closing it?



The North South Corridor presents the most immediate opportunity. It connects Zimbabwe with South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, spanning mining, agriculture, manufacturing, energy, and logistics, extending beyond road and rail to border modernisation, logistics hubs, mineral beneficiation, and supporting energy infrastructure.

Our strongest regional partners are the SADC Secretariat and the Development Bank of Southern Africa, which manages the SADC Project Preparation and Development Facility. Their project-preparation capability is essential: regional concepts must be converted into technically sound, commercially viable, investable projects. ZIDA identifies Zimbabwe's investment components, facilitates the required approvals, and connects credible investors with relevant institutions.

Mining and energy dominate Zimbabwe's investment narrative. Name one under-invested sector, technology, agro processing, or the creative economy, where ZIDA sees the highest return potential in the next decade, and the specific fiscal or regulatory shift that would unlock it.



Agro processing is Zimbabwe's most compelling under invested opportunity. The country has an established agricultural base across horticulture, livestock, grains, oilseeds, and tobacco, yet considerable value is lost through limited processing, inadequate cold-chain infrastructure, and exporting products in relatively unprocessed form.

The greatest returns will come from investments that integrate production, processing, packaging, storage, logistics, and export distribution. The most important enabling shift would be a predictable, performance based incentive framework for investors who establish export-oriented processing facilities, procure locally, and create sustainable contract farming arrangements, supported by streamlined land access, efficient equipment importation, and dependable energy and water. ZIDA is particularly interested in projects that transform agriculture into an industrial value chain.

The Grand Hyatt Victoria Falls deal signals international hospitality appetite. Is it a one off transaction, or does ZIDA have active conversations with other global hotel groups, and what would a second comparable deal require in fiscal terms?



The Grand Hyatt Victoria Falls development should not be viewed as an isolated transaction. It will become Hyatt's second branded property in Zimbabwe, following the Hyatt Regency Harare, demonstrating that established international brands are prepared to make long-term commitments to this market.

Individual discussions remain commercially confidential until the parties are ready to announce. A second comparable transaction would require more than a tax concession. Investors look for clarity on land tenure, predictable licensing, efficient capital equipment approvals, dependable infrastructure, air connectivity, and confidence in the repatriation of returns. ZIDA coordinates these requirements through the One-Stop investment Services Centre.

Victoria Falls captures international hospitality capital almost automatically. What specific incentive structures or de-risking mechanisms is ZIDA deploying to make Great Zimbabwe, Hwange, and the Eastern Highlands equally compelling to a hotel group underwriting a new property?



The objective is not to replicate Victoria Falls, but to build investment propositions around each destination's distinctive strengths. Great Zimbabwe offers cultural and heritage tourism; Hwange provides wildlife and safari opportunities; the Eastern Highlands offers eco tourism, wellness, adventure, and premium retreat products.

De-risking combines targeted fiscal incentives with practical project preparation, identifying suitable land, clarifying development rights, preparing feasibility information, and coordinating access to roads, electricity, water, and digital connectivity. Tourism investors may access applicable duty rebates and tax incentives. Where a project is sufficiently strategic, it may qualify for Special Economic Zone designation or a public-private partnership structure.

Accommodation captures attention, but aviation, conference infrastructure, and tourism technology are equally investable opportunities. Which specific link in Zimbabwe's tourism value chain is most capital ready today, and where is private investment genuinely ahead of government provision?



Aviation connectivity is the most capital-ready link in Zimbabwe's wider tourism value chain. The country has the attractions and an expanding accommodation base, but additional direct regional and international routes would increase visitor volumes and strengthen the commercial case for investment beyond Victoria Falls.

The opportunity extends to airport services, cargo and cold-chain facilities, aircraft maintenance, transfer services, and digital travel platforms. Private investment is already moving strongly in accommodation, booking technology, transport, and conference products.

A more liberalised regional aviation market would allow Zimbabwe to be marketed as part of multi-destination Southern African itineraries.

Diaspora professionals who can deploy £250,000 £500,000 individually or collectively in higher tranches, remain largely untapped beyond remittances. What structured investment vehicle or ZIDA pathway exists today for that ticket size, and what is the realistic timeline to first participation?



Diaspora capital at this level should be treated as investment, not an extension of household remittances. An individual investor can approach ZIDA directly with a project or seek participation in an existing opportunity. Where several investors wish to pool capital, the appropriate route is a special-purpose vehicle, company, or regulated collective-investment structure.

ZIDA assists with opportunity identification, investment licensing, regulatory coordination, and partner introductions through the One-Stop Investment Services Centre. Once the investment structure and business proposal are complete, the licensing component can be processed efficiently. Realistic participation in an established project may require approximately 60 to 90 days for due diligence, structuring, and regulatory processes. The key is transparent projects with defined participation terms, governance arrangements, exit provisions, and regular reporting.

Capital follows bankable projects. How far is ZIDA's Single Window from delivering investors a pipeline with completed feasibility work, regulatory sign off, and defined participation structures, and which sector will pilot that model first?



The Zimbabwe Investment Single Window and a pipeline of fully bankable projects are related but distinct products. The Single Window provides investors with a unified digital interface for registrations, licences, and approvals; the first stage has already established the e-Regulations and e-Procedures framework.

Bankability requires additional work: feasibility studies, environmental assessments, financial modelling, regulatory approvals, and a clearly defined investment structure. ZIDA is working with project sponsors, government agencies, development finance institutions, and transaction advisers to move concepts to investment ready propositions.

Renewable energy is well-positioned to pilot this model, given strong investor demand and comparatively well established participation structures.

By 2030, which two or three investments landed today, by sector, scale, and investor type, would confirm Zimbabwe's strategy had genuinely succeeded? And which emerging corridor should an international or diaspora investor be watching right now, before it becomes obvious?



By 2030, success would be demonstrated by investments that alter the economy's structure and productive capacity.

First, large-scale renewable energy and transmission investments capable of reliably supplying industry and supporting regional electricity trade, bringing together strategic investors, independent power producers, and development finance institutions.

Second, integrated mineral beneficiation investments moving beyond extraction into refining, intermediate products, and manufacturing, combining long-term capital, technology, skills development, and access to global markets.

Third, major agro-industrial and tourism investments outside the traditional centres, supported by logistics, cold chains, aviation, and digital infrastructure, broadening provincial participation and strengthening export earnings.

The corridor to watch is the North-South Corridor. Investors should examine logistics, warehousing, renewable energy, agro-processing, and mineral beneficiation along this route before opportunities become fully priced. The emerging lithium industrialisation corridor linking Zimbabwe with Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa is equally important for investors examining battery minerals and green manufacturing.

About the Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency

ZIDA promotes and facilitates investment under the Office of the President, governed by the ZIDA Act (Chapter 14:37). The Agency supports three investment categories, General Investment, Public-Private Partnerships, and Special Economic Zones, and operates a One-Stop Investment Services Centre (OSISC) providing end-to-end support from company registration and licensing through to investor aftercare and project monitoring.

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One Billion Bricks

Ken Sharpe has been building Zimbabwe's future for decades. With championship fairways, a US\$100 million retail hub, and a US\$5 billion land bank already in play, he is only getting started



Stand at the edge of The Hills Luxury Golf Estate at dusk, when the last of the light catches the Harare hills and the 127-hectare PGA-standard course stretches out below you, and it becomes hard to argue with Ken Sharpe's ambition. Zimbabwe has always had this, the land, the scale, the sheer unhurried grandeur of the place. What it has rarely had is someone willing to build to match it.

Sharpe, Chief Executive of WestProp Holdings, has been at it for years, and the evidence is written across the city around him. From Gunhill Rise, which set a new standard for residential living when it came to market, to the towers of Millennium Heights and the forthcoming Mall of Zimbabwe, his handprint is visible across Harare's evolving skyline. "Our vision is to lay one billion bricks by 2050, bringing Dubai-style developments to Zimbabwe and beyond," he says. Much of that vision is already standing.

The Hills is the project that perhaps best captures what WestProp is doing. A 127-hectare PGA-standard course, yes, but also a swimming academy and tennis courts wrapped around a luxury residential community, all at one address. A destination you stay in, not just visit. Stand on any tee and the ambition is obvious.

That ambition scales. Pomona City is conceived as a smart city, homes and offices built around shared leisure space, not bolted together as an afterthought. Millennium Heights, already a symbol of a new kind of living in Harare, saw entire phases sell out before completion; the city's appetite for this kind of address was never in question. Then there is the Mall of Zimbabwe, a US\$100 million retail destination that, when it opens, will rank among the great shopping experiences on the continent.



Sharpe is not the only name behind all of this. He is clear on that. Chief Projects Officer Mandla Ndebele is the figure most closely associated with WestProp's precision in delivery. The company's in-house teams including brick manufacturing and development subsidiaries give it a degree of vertical control unusual in the sector. Together, they have built not just properties but a reputation for following through.

"Behind every vision and every success is a strong team. It is never about the individual it is always about the team that supports the leader."

Ken Sharpe, Chief Executive, WestProp Holdings



That reputation has attracted attention. WestProp has been named Company of the Year in Zimbabwe's construction sector, taken International Property Awards in Dubai, and collected the African Achievers Award for Organisation of the Year. Sharpe himself has addressed the G20 Summit, recognised for distinguished African business leadership. The kind of ambition that earns invitations to global stages. The kind that signals Zimbabwe's property market is no longer a story about potential alone.

Today, WestProp holds a US\$5 billion land bank and a gaze set firmly on the continent beyond Harare. The Chivhu Eco City is the next frontier, a planned community that extends WestProp's vision into new territory, built from the ground up around the idea that living well and living sustainably are the same conversation. Swanville Estate in Bulawayo follows. The country is being reimagined, not just in the capital but across its map.



For Zimbabweans who have watched all of this from London or Johannesburg, or further afield, Millennium Heights carries a particular resonance. Completing a development worth over \$100 million is significant anywhere. In Harare, it reads as something more than money, a signal that the Zimbabwe you left, or the Zimbabwe your parents described to you, is no longer waiting for the world to notice. It is building. "Zimbabwe now carries the spirit of Dubai," Sharpe has said. At the base of Millennium Heights, that claim does not feel far off.

Industry: Hospitality Business

► Mbano Manor

The New Standard Of Luxury



As travellers rethink what five-star hospitality should feel like, six years of operation have given Mban Manor something more valuable than novelty: a track record.

The more travelled the guest, the harder they are to impress. Beautiful rooms, crisp linen, accomplished kitchens — at the upper end of hospitality, these are the entry ticket, not the prize. What increasingly separates one luxury experience from another is harder to itemise: privacy, time, intuitive service, a sense of place and how a guest feels while there.

Victoria Falls makes this distinction vivid. The Falls crash into the Batoka Gorge in one of nature's most overwhelming performances. Helicopters trace the Zambezi from above. Safari vehicles press into the bush bordering Zambezi National Park. One of Africa's great spectacles unfolds at a pace that demands full attention.

Then there is Mban Manor. Four acres of indigenous teak forest, adjacent to the Park, sit a few minutes from that roar. Eight luxury suites. One two-bedroom Mutota Forest Villa. The scale itself communicates the intention.

Sixty-one percent of high-end travellers now prefer customised journeys over pre-packaged itineraries. The appetite has never been more clearly stated: fewer guests, more attention, deeper presence.

Large hotels have scale on their side. Smaller properties have nowhere to hide and that, paradoxically, is their advantage.

With eight suites, Mban cannot manufacture the distance and anonymity of a larger resort. What it can offer, and what its guests increasingly demand, is something rarer: a stay shaped entirely around the guest. Honeymooners seeking seclusion. Multigenerational families who want shared space without the separation of a sprawling property. Well-travelled guests who have simply had enough of feeling like room 204. The requirements differ. The underlying need is the same: to experience a destination entirely on their own terms.

After The Falls

There is a question every Victoria Falls property must answer: what does the traveller need after seeing it?

Mban's answer is retreat.

The teak canopy muffles the heat of the day. Birdsong replaces ambient noise. At Bayuni Spa, treatments are available in the spa itself or, quietly, in the guest's own suite. The forest and the stillness do most of the atmospheric work.

"We cross continents determined to see everything, then discover that one of the genuine luxuries is having nowhere we need to be."





The Villa – And The Luxury Of Control

The Mutota Forest Villa takes Mbano's proposition to its logical conclusion.

Two bedrooms. Private plunge pool. Indoor and outdoor living spaces. Dedicated butler. Private chef. The amenities are impressive. But the deeper luxury is control: over rhythm, pace, and routine. Breakfast follows the guest, not the clock. Dinner is private. Excursions are arranged around the family's schedule. Several generations can share a single property without surrendering their individual tempo.

For travellers at this level of the market, friction is the enemy. Seamlessness, which appears effortless when delivered well, is among the most demanding things in hospitality to actually achieve.

African Luxury Without The Costume

Mbano articulates its proposition as global standards delivered through an African expression of connection, warmth and storytelling.

Behind that sits a more substantive question for the continent's hospitality sector: what should African luxury actually look and feel like?

Not another safari motif. Not an imported interpretation of design. Not a performance of authenticity calibrated for outside audiences. Something more confident: the standards a globally well-travelled guest expects, with no ambiguity about where they are.

At Mbano, this comes through the teak forest, the intimate scale, and the Zimbabwean people who deliver the experience. Its ownership adds dimension: Mbano is African, Black female-founded and owned. Six years after opening, that credential neither needs to carry the entire story nor disappear within it.

The property's argument rests on a simpler question, one any serious hospitality product must eventually face: Is it good enough?

Six Years Changes The Conversation

There is now evidence.

In 2025, TIME included Mbano Manor among its World's Greatest Places, a list drawn from expert nominations in health, education, sustainability, culture, and food. The Association of Zimbabwe Travel Agents named it Best Boutique Hotel in Zimbabwe in both 2024 and 2025.

Virtuoso, 2026 Luxe Report: Luxury travellers increasingly seek experiences that are "meaningful, restorative and deeply personal." That appetite runs precisely toward what Mbano has spent six years building.



Awards confirm. Time validates. Six years means guests have arrived and departed, service has been stress tested, and international travellers have compared Mbano, consciously or otherwise, with properties across Asia, Europe and the Americas.

The conversation is no longer about whether it can compete at an international level. It is about where it belongs among the choices available to someone deciding how to spend their time at the Falls. That is a much harder question, and a far better one to be in.

What Survives Checkout?

Hotels photograph beautifully. Suites, plunge pools, rituals, forest views. Travellers carry something else home. A staff member who remembered how they took their coffee. An unexpectedly long breakfast. Waking to birdsong rather than an alarm. The sensation, rare, and therefore genuinely luxurious, of belonging somewhere for a few days rather than simply passing through.

Victoria Falls gives you something extraordinary to witness. The new luxury is having somewhere equally considered to come back to.



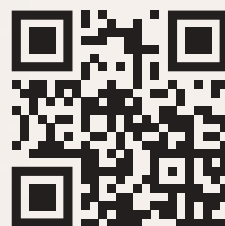
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REDISCOVERING ZIMBABWE'S ELEGANCE



► Beyond The Boardroom

The Six-Day Traveller Reshaping
African Tourism —

What if the most valuable business traveller to Southern Africa is not the one who stays three nights, but the one who finds a reason to stay six?

A deal is concluded in Harare on Thursday afternoon. The meetings are over, the laptop could be packed away, and the traveller could be on Friday night's flight home.

Or, by Friday evening, that same traveller could be watching the Zambezi turn gold at sunset, spending another three nights in the country, dining locally, booking experiences and perhaps seeing an investment opportunity they would never have discovered from a boardroom.

That small change in itinerary represents a much bigger shift for Southern African tourism. It is the rise of bleisure, the increasingly blurred space between business and leisure travel and Southern Africa may be unusually well positioned to capitalise on it.

The Value Of One More Weekend

The economics are compelling, and the global evidence is now unambiguous. 68% of corporate travellers extended at least one business trip for leisure in 2024. Business guests now stay 20% longer than before the pandemic.

Business travellers already arrive with much of the expensive part of the journey accounted for: the international flight has been booked, the meeting has justified the trip, and the traveller is already in-market. Crucially, because transport costs are covered by their employer, 66% of bleisure travellers report spending more on leisure activities than they otherwise would.

The opportunity is therefore no longer simply getting them here. It is giving them a reason to stay. A three-day corporate visit that becomes a six-day journey creates additional demand for accommodation, restaurants, domestic aviation, transfers, guides, attractions, retail and experiences. More importantly, it changes the traveller's relationship with a destination.

The person who arrived to attend a conference can leave having experienced the country. And that distinction matters.

The Missing Bridge

Southern Africa already possesses both sides of the equation. Cities such as Harare, Johannesburg, Lusaka, Gaborone and Cape Town function as commercial gateways, while extraordinary leisure experiences sit remarkably close to them: Victoria Falls, Hwange, the Okavango Delta, the Zambezi and countless private reserves and retreats.

The problem is the space between the two. For a time-conscious executive, changing accommodation providers, arranging separate transfers, making multiple payments, reconfirming flights and wondering whether connectivity will survive Monday morning's call can make an extension feel more complicated than it is worth. The friction is rarely about cost; it is about coordination.

The industry's next competitive advantage may be less about building another spectacular lodge and more about removing friction between existing experiences.



From A Hotel Stay To A Hospitality Ecosystem

This is where operators with footprints spanning business and leisure locations become strategically significant.

Zimbabwe's The Liam Collection points towards the potential of a hospitality model capable of serving different purposes within a single journey from sophisticated urban accommodation to destination-led stays elsewhere in the country.

The broader lesson extends beyond any single brand. Imagine arriving for three days of meetings with the practicalities already handled: airport transfer, accommodation, connectivity and billing. When business concludes, the same hospitality ecosystem moves you seamlessly into the leisure portion of the journey. No starting again. No unfamiliar chain of suppliers. No unnecessary coordination overhead.

For the traveller, it feels effortless. For the operator, those additional nights represent revenue that might otherwise have departed with the passenger.

Global Context

The bleisure segment was valued at US\$762 billion in 2025 and is growing at nearly 13% annually, reaching an estimated US\$2.21 trillion by 2034. Africa's share remains underweight relative to its appeal, which is precisely where the opportunity lies.



For The Diaspora, It Goes Deeper

There is another traveller for whom this model has particular significance: the African diaspora professional. A Zimbabwean executive living in London, Birmingham or Johannesburg may return ostensibly for a conference, a family commitment or a business meeting but the journey rarely carries only one purpose.



Liam Collection



There may be property to inspect. A business opportunity to explore. People to meet. A destination to rediscover.

For this traveller, leisure can function as informal market intelligence. Three additional days travelling through the country can reveal what no investment prospectus can road connectivity, service standards, consumer behaviour, emerging neighbourhoods and the confidence or otherwise that comes from physically experiencing a market.

Diaspora Capital

Zimbabwe's diaspora remitted US\$1.9 billion in the first nine months of 2024 alone, up 16.5% year on year, making diaspora capital one of the country's largest sources of foreign currency. Hospitality, real estate and tourism consistently rank among the sectors in which diaspora professionals' express investment intent.



Today's guest may be tomorrow's investor, repeat visitor, property buyer or ambassador.

Stop Selling Nights. Start Selling Time

At exhibitions such as Sangana/Hlanganani, Southern Africa's opportunity is consequently larger than selling beds and itineraries independently.

Zimbabwe Tourism 2024

Over 1.6 million international arrivals recorded across the full year 2024. In the first half alone, tourism receipts reached US\$493 million, a 24% increase on the prior year. The arrivals are there. The question is what each one is worth.



The more powerful proposition for tourism boards, airlines, hotels and experience operators is connectivity, the removal of the barrier between the corporate schedule and the leisure instinct.

Monday–Thursday: Business.
Friday–Sunday: Africa.

One journey. Six days. Multiple economies touched. Success will increasingly depend not on the magnificence of individual products, though those remain essential, but on how easily those worlds can be joined.

Because the great untapped tourism product may not be another destination at all. It may simply be the three extra days we haven't yet persuaded the traveller to stay.



Liam Collection Newlands



Liam Collection



Artificial intelligence is reshaping how travellers discover, choose, and experience destinations worldwide. The question for Southern Africa's tourism leaders is no longer whether to prepare, it is whether to lead the transformation or merely react to it.

The AI Dividend

AI & the future of
Destination Marketing

The Moment the Algorithm Took Over

"Plan me a ten-day luxury safari through Zimbabwe's national parks and Eastern Highlands." A traveller somewhere in London or São Paulo types of the question into an AI assistant. Within seconds, an itinerary emerges. Hotels are ranked. Activities sequenced. A packing list appears. No travel agent consulted. No brochure opened. No destination marketing board's carefully curated content viewed. This is not a future scenario. It is already the present.

According to Phocuswright's 2025 research, 38% of American travellers used generative AI to research trips in the past year, up 11 percentage points year-over-year, one of the fastest behavioural shifts in travel industry history.

Skift Research confirms: 56% of US leisure travellers now use AI tools at some stage of trip planning.

Globally, SiteMinder's Changing Traveller Report found that nearly 80% of travellers are open to using AI for planning, booking, and experiencing their holidays.

These figures are not merely impressive. They represent a fundamental restructuring of how destinations get discovered—and which ones get chosen.

"AI is not the disruption. Under-preparedness is."



From Search Engine to AI Engine

For most of the internet era, destination marketing followed a familiar logic: invest in content, rank highly on Google, attract clicks, convert browsers into bookers. That logic has not disappeared. But it is rapidly being supplemented—and in certain categories, displaced by a new dynamic: the AI recommendation engine.

Travellers increasingly ask AI platforms not where to find information, but what decision to make. The shift from search to conversation is consequential. AI assistants draw on different signals than search engines: synthesising structured data, traveller reviews, editorial coverage, and contextual understanding of user intent. A destination that dominates Google but is poorly represented in the data feeding AI systems may find itself invisible to an entirely new, highly valuable traveller segment.

Gartner predicts that traditional search engine volume will drop 25% by 2026 as AI chatbots and virtual agents capture an increasing share of query traffic. For tourism marketing professionals, this creates an emerging discipline: Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO)—ensuring that AI systems accurately understand and recommend your destination as a first-choice response, not a footnote to better-resourced competitors.

Southern Africa's most compelling tourism products—Zimbabwe's wild heritage corridors, the Matobo Hills, the Eastern Highlands' misty landscapes—are among the world's most differentiated. But differentiation only converts into bookings if it is legible to the systems travellers now use to make decisions.

The African Reality Check

Africa attracted 74 million tourists in 2024, consolidating its position as one of the world's fastest-recovering tourism regions. Zimbabwe specifically welcomed over 1.6 million international arrivals, generating more than US\$1.2 billion in receipts and attracting US\$190.5 million in new investments—a 7% year-on-year increase. Those are not marginal numbers. They are a foundation. And the question facing Zimbabwe's tourism ecosystem—as it convenes at Sangana/Hlanganani in Masvingo this September and sends delegates to World Travel Market London in November—is how to compound them in an environment where technology is reshaping every link in the tourism value chain.

The signals from the continent are encouraging. A 2025 survey of African tourism businesses found that 85% are already using AI or plan to integrate it within the next year.

Strategic regional collaboration is accelerating: Cape Town, Zimbabwe, and Namibia formalised a landmark tourism partnership at WTM Africa 2025 to unify marketing efforts, share digital insights, and develop joint itineraries for long-haul visitors.

The initiative recognises a fundamental truth about how AI recommends destinations: multi-country itineraries with rich data representation convert more effectively than isolated single-country propositions. For Zimbabwe, participation in regional data-sharing frameworks is not merely a diplomatic nicety—it is a competitive advantage.

What AI Is Actually Doing in Tourism

The hype around AI in travel oscillates between utopian and alarmist. The operational reality is more practical and more instructive.

AI-powered customer service tools can now handle approximately 80% of standard travel enquiries: availability checks, FAQ responses, booking confirmations freeing human staff for the high-touch interactions that drive loyalty. For hotels and lodges on lean staffing models, this is not a futuristic capability. It is a cost efficiency lever available today.

"AI can act as a unifying tool, facilitating data-driven solutions that allow tourism entrepreneurs to customise packages tailored to the preferences of potential visitors."

— Dr. Farai Chigora, Africa University



Revenue management is another high-impact application. AI-enhanced pricing systems can deliver revenue uplifts of up to 10% for hotels by dynamically adjusting rates in response to real-time demand signals. Combined with AI-driven upselling—guided add-on calibrated to guest preference—total ancillary revenue potential increases by a further 10–15%.

For destination marketing organisations, the transformative applications are strategic. 49% of DMOs globally anticipate AI's most significant impact to be in content creation.[10] But the organisations that will win are those using AI not just to produce content faster, but to understand their audiences more deeply than competitors can—reaching the right traveller with the right message now of decision.

The global market signals reinforce this urgency. The AI in tourism sector is projected to grow from US\$3.4 billion in 2024 to US\$13.9 billion by 2030—a compound annual growth rate of 26.7%.[11] That is not the growth curve of a peripheral technology. It is the growth curve of a foundational infrastructure shift.

The Asymmetry of Inaction

There is a temptation, in markets where capital for technology investment is constrained, to treat AI readiness as a luxury—something to revisit once more foundational issues are resolved. This framing inverts the actual risk calculus.

The asymmetry of AI adoption in tourism is this: late movers do not simply miss the upside. They inherit a structural disadvantage that compounds over time. When AI systems learn to recommend destinations with rich data profiles over those with thin ones—when booking engines optimise toward operators with AI enhanced conversion rates—the gap between prepared and unprepared destinations is not temporary. It is embedded in the algorithms themselves.

The UNWTO's January 2025 report on AI adoption in tourism is direct on the equity dimension: AI's benefits must be accessible to all communities, not merely those with first-mover resources. That principle creates both an obligation and an opportunity for regional leadership. Southern Africa has a chance not to catch up to a trend, but to shape its trajectory on the continent.

The Strategic Imperative

The good news is that AI readiness does not require massive capital expenditure. It requires structured thinking about data, digital presence, and partnerships and the will to act before the competitive landscape calcifies.

For Zimbabwe's tourism leadership, Sangana and WTM represent precisely the right forums to move from awareness to commitment. The conversations happening in Masvingo in September and London in November are not merely about showcasing product. They are about signalling to the global investment and travel trade community that Zimbabwe's tourism ecosystem is building for the next era—not just the next season.

The practical dimensions of AI readiness—data infrastructure, governance, content strategy, staff capability, and partnership frameworks are explored in the accompanying sidebar.

But the orienting question is simpler, and it is the one that every executive, destination manager, and investor should carry from this page into every conversation this year:

The AI revolution in tourism is not coming. It is here. And in a continent with as much story to tell as Africa, the only real risk is choosing not to tell it on the platforms where tomorrow's travellers are already listening.

Key Takeaways

1. The global AI tourism market grows from US\$3.4 billion (2024) to US\$13.9 billion by 2030 — a 26.7% annual rate that rewards early infrastructure investment.
2. 38% of travellers already use generative AI to research trips, fundamentally changing which destinations get discovered and chosen.
3. 85% of African tourism businesses are already adopting or planning AI integration but intent must convert to implementation to yield competitive advantage.
4. Zimbabwe's sector — 1.6 million arrivals, US\$1.2 billion in receipts — is positioned to leverage AI for the volume to-value conversion investors and policymakers want to see.
5. Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO) is the emerging discipline that determines AI-assisted traveller visibility. Any destination willing to invest in data quality and digital presence can compete.

Is your destination building toward AI fluency—or waiting to be told it has already been left behind?



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KAZA

The world's largest conservation stage —

If one initiative embodies the argument for borderless tourism, it is the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area.

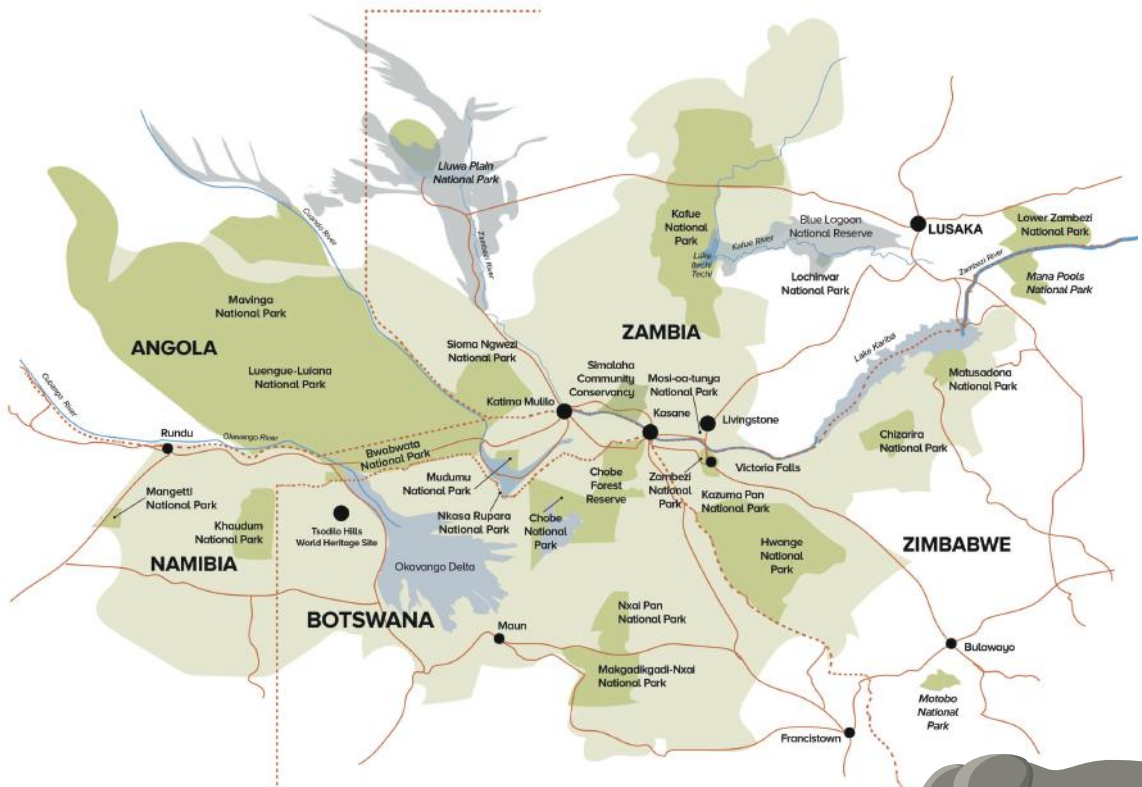
At 516,406 km² – roughly the size of France – KAZA is the world's largest land-based transboundary conservation area, spanning Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe across 36 proclaimed protected areas. Within its boundaries, approximately two million people live alongside the planet's greatest concentration of large wildlife.

At the centre of this living landscape is the African savanna elephant. The most recent aerial survey of KAZA's elephant population, conducted by Elephants Without Borders across more than 40,000 miles of aerial coverage, estimated a total population of **227,900 African Savanna Elephants** (The largest contiguous savanna elephant population on Earth).

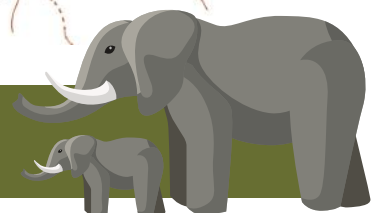
Country	Elephant Population
Botswana	131,909
Zimbabwe	65,028
Namibia	21,090
Angola	5,983
Zambia	3,840

Source: Elephants Without Borders / KAZA TFCA Secretariat. Aerial survey, August–October 2022.

These elephants move without regard to national boundaries. From Chobe to the Okavango, from Hwange to the Caprivi Strip, following ancient migration corridors that long predate the borders drawn across them.



"The elephant photographed crossing the Chobe at dawn may sleep in a different country by evening. **Selling Botswana's Chobe without Zimbabwe's Hwange is selling half the experience at the full price.**"



Great Limpopo: Another Frontier

To the south, the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park offers a second, equally compelling example. Currently spanning approximately 35,000 km², with a long-term vision of reaching nearly 100,000 km², Great Limpopo connects South Africa's Kruger National Park, Zimbabwe's Gonarezhou, and Mozambique's Limpopo National Park.

The opening of cross border access facilities between the parks means that, in principle, a single itinerary can encompass the lion density of Sabi Sands, the wilderness of Gonarezhou, and the coastal promise of southern Mozambique. That itinerary is barely being sold.

Great Limpopo by the Numbers:

147 mammal species • 116 reptile species • 500+ bird species • 2,000+ plant species.

Kruger National Park alone:

10,000 elephants, 1.5 million+ annual visitors.

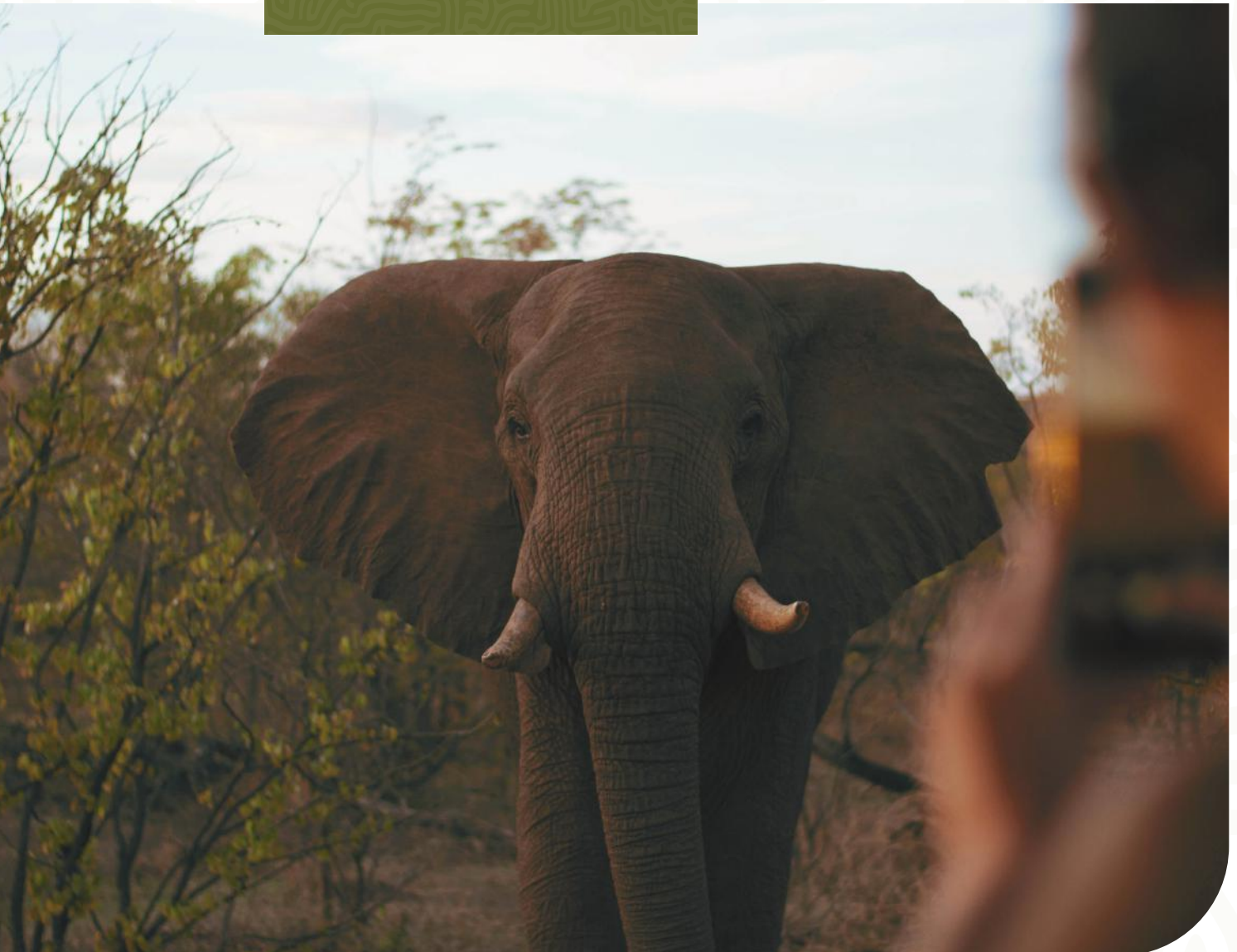


Wings And Trunks: Nature As A Cross-border Argument

The case extends beyond elephants. The African-Eurasian Flyway, one of the world's great migratory bird routes, carries an estimated 2 billion birds annually between Africa and Eurasia, with Southern Africa's wetlands serving a critical staging and wintering grounds.

Botswana's Okavango Delta, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is one of the hemisphere's premier bird sanctuaries: carmine bee-eaters nest along the Boteti River, African skimmers patrol the Okavango's channels from August to November, and more than 540 bird species have been recorded within the Delta alone. The Zambezi watershed, spanning Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana, creates a continuous avian corridor that no single national park brochure can adequately describe.

For high-value, specialist travellers, birding tourists, who typically spend significantly above the average, the cross border ecology is itself the itinerary. They are not visiting a country. They are following a migration.



► When Climate Changes The Map

Redefining Tourism's Future
in a Warming World —

TOURISM WITHOUT BORDERS

— Unlocking Shared Prosperity —
Across Southern Africa

Tourism connects people, powers economies
and creates opportunities that cross borders.



SOUTHERN AFRICA TOURISM SNAPSHOT
2025 ESTIMATES & 2028 FORECASTS

Redefining Tourism's Future in a Warming World

The brochure says the waterfall will always fall. The wilderness lodge says the wildlife will always gather. The coastal resort says the beach will still be there in the morning.

Climate change is now reviewing all three claims.

For Southern Africa's tourism operators — managing some of the most extraordinary nature-based travel experiences on Earth — this is not a distant abstraction. It is a balance sheet question arriving ahead of schedule.

The Business Risk has a number

Travel and tourism account for 7.3% of global greenhouse gas emissions, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council's 2024 data — down from 8.3% in 2019 as emissions intensity fell 15% relative to economic output. Progress is real. But it is not fast enough, and the sector's vulnerability to the very problem it partially creates is intensifying.

Transport drives 40% of the industry's carbon footprint, with supply chains accounting for 57.4%. Aviation — the lifeline of Southern Africa's international arrivals — sits squarely in the heaviest column. That tension between mobility and conservation is not going away.

For investors and operators, the question is not whether climate risk is real. It is whether they are pricing it.

7.3%

of global GHG emissions come
from travel & tourism (WTTC 2024)
— down from 8.3% in 2019

WTTC 2024

Where Southern Africa Stands

Southern Africa's tourism proposition is almost entirely nature dependent. Rivers, deltas, wildlife corridors, coastlines, deserts — these are the product. And the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report is unequivocal: Southern Africa has warmed faster than the global average, with heatwaves and extremely hot days on the rise.

The data is specific enough to be actionable. Research projects that visitation across South Africa's national parks — including Kruger, the continent's busiest wildlife destination — could decline by nearly 4% by 2050 as rising temperatures make peak-season outdoor experiences increasingly uncomfortable. Wildlife viewing hours are already shifting; the midday bush falls quiet earlier and the financial model built around full-day game drives must shift with it.

In Botswana's Okavango Delta, communities reliant on nature-based tourism report observable changes: increased temperatures, declining rainfall, more frequent extremes. The delta's hydrology — the engine of one of the world's great wildlife spectacles — is under measurable stress.

Mozambique's exposure is more acute. Its long Indian Ocean coastline sits in one of the most cyclone-prone corridors in the Southern Hemisphere. Between 1984 and 2023, 15 cyclones exceeding 120 km/h struck the coast. A new coastal resort's feasibility study that does not model 40 years of storm surge and erosion risk is not a business plan. It is a guess.

"A new coastal resort's feasibility study that does not model 40 years of storm surge risk is not a business plan. It is a guess."

The operators who are already acting

The good news — and there is genuine good news — is that some of Southern Africa's most respected operators are not waiting for regulation or crisis.

Wilderness Safaris, running more than 60 camps across eight African countries, has made renewable energy a design standard rather than a feature. Its flagship Mombo Camp in the Okavango Delta now operates entirely on solar power following an US\$860,000 investment in photovoltaic infrastructure — reducing camp emissions by 97%. Wilderness has committed publicly that no new camp will be built without a major element of renewable energy. For a company operating where Eskom cannot reach and diesel logistics are volatile, this is simultaneously an ethical position and a sound operating model.

Singita, protecting over one million acres across South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Rwanda, applies an automatic carbon-neutral levy to every guest booking — directing proceeds into verified conservation projects in the countries where the company operates. At Sabora Tented Camp in Tanzania, an on-site solar farm reduced diesel dependency by 85%. In 2024, Singita Kruger National Park became a fellow of The Long Run, a global community of tourism operators committed to anchoring conservation, community, culture and commerce together.

These are not marginal gestures dressed in sustainability language. They are operating cost decisions with long-term viability logic behind them.

Operator	Climate Action	Impact
Wilderness Safaris	Solar power — Mombo Camp, Botswana	Impact
Wilderness Safaris	\$860K PV investment; no new camp without renewables	Impact
Singita	Carbon-neutral levy per booking	1M+ acres protected
Singita Sabora (Tanzania)	On-site solar farm	85% diesel reduction

Conservation

Resilience is the next competitive advantage

The IPCC makes an observation that deserves more attention in the boardroom than it typically receives year-round: product diversification is one of the most effective adaptation strategies available to tourism destinations.

The implication is clear. Operators who have built their entire revenue model on one season, one ecosystem, or one dramatic natural event are structurally exposed. Those who have moved into year-round wellness, cultural programming, MICE, gastronomy, heritage and community experiences are better insulated – not because those products are immune to climate, but because they spread risk across a far wider base.

Nature is not the backdrop to Southern Africa's tourism economy. It is a core infrastructure asset. A lodge that protects a watershed is not practising conservation as a

branding exercise – it is protecting water security and future revenue. A company investing in community resilience – local livelihoods, local food systems, local water infrastructure – has a buffer that no insurance policy can fully replicate.

The operators who treat their natural surroundings as productive capital rather than inherited scenery are building businesses designed for the next fifty years, not the last fifty.

Southern Africa's tourism industry has world-class landscapes, world-class traditions of conservation, and world-class evidence that acting early pays.

The map is changing. The only strategic question left is whether the industry leads that change, or waits to inherit what remains.

▶ "A new coastal resort's feasibility study that does not model 40 years of storm surge risk is not a business plan. It is a guess."



Southern Africa is a land of contrasts, where every destination offers a bespoke safari adventure tailored to the discerning traveller. From the wetlands of **Botswana** to the deserts of **Namibia**, the vibrant and scapes of **South Africa**, the untamed wilds of **Zimbabwe**.

Safari Adventure in Southern Africa

The Ultimate Bespoke
Experience

Southern Africa is an unparalleled beauty, adventure, and luxury treasure trove. It's a region where the wild heart of Africa beats strongest, offering discerning travellers bespoke safari adventures that promise unforgettable memories. For those aged 30-45, seeking both thrill and comfort, Southern Africa's diverse landscapes and exclusive lodges provide the perfect getaway. Here's a curated guide to experiencing the best safari destinations in Southern Africa, complete with detailed tour packages for each destination.



Botswana:

The Jewel of the Kalahari

Where to Stay:

Sanctuary Chief's Camp:

Located on Chief's Island in the Moremi Game Reserve, this luxury camp offers private pavilions with plunge pools and exceptional delta views. Belmond Eagle Island Lodge: Situated on a private island, this lodge offers helicopter safaris, mokoro excursions, and fish eagle viewing.

Best Time to Visit

June to October:

The dry season offers the best wildlife viewing as animals congregate around water sources.

Tour Package:

Okavango Delta Explorer

Duration: 7 Days / 6 Nights

Itinerary:

- Day 1-2: Arrival in Maun, transfer to Sanctuary Chief's Camp in the Okavango Delta: evening game drive and welcome dinner.
- Day 3-4: Moremi Game Reserve Full-day game drives and mokoro (dugout canoe) excursions bushwalks and birdwatching with experienced guides.
- Day 5-6: Eagle Island Transfer to Belmond Eagle Island Lodge helicopter safari over the delta and private boat trips.
- Day 7: Departure Morning game drive, transfer back to Maun for departure.

South Africa

A Symphony of Landscapes

Where to Stay:

Sabi Sabi Earth Lodge:

Nestled in the Sabi Sand Game Reserve, this eco friendly lodge offers luxurious suites and a renowned wellness spa.

Tswalu Kalahari:

In the heart of the Kalahari, Tswalu offers private game drives and a chance to see rare species like the black-maned Kalahari lion.

Best Time to Visit:

May to September:

The dry winter months are ideal for wildlife spotting in Kruger and Sabi Sand. March to May: The late summer offers a lush landscape post-rain for the Kalahari.

Tour Package:

Duration: 10 Days / 9 Nights

Itinerary:

- Day 1-3: Sabi Sabi Earth Lodge, Sabi Sand Game Reserve. Arrival in Johannesburg, transfer to Sabi Sand. Morning and evening game drives, and relaxation at the wellness spa.
- Day 4-6: Tswalu Kalahari Fly to Tswalu Kalahari. Private game drives, guided walks, and horseback safaris.
- Day 7-9: Kruger National Park Transfer to a luxury lodge in Kruger: Full-day game drives, bush dinners, and sundowner excursions.
- Day 10: Departure Morning game drive, transfer back to Johannesburg for departure.

Mozambique

The Coastal Wilderness

Where to Stay:

Beach and Bush Safari

Best Time to Visit:

May to September:

The dry winter months are ideal for wildlife spotting in Kruger and Sabi Sand. March to May: The late summer offers a lush landscape post-rain for the Kalahari.

Tour Package:

Duration: 10 Days / 9 Nights

Itinerary:

- Day 1-3: Gorongosa National Park Arrival in Beira, transfer to Muzimu Tented Camp. Game drives, birdwatching, and community visits.
- Day 4-6: Bazaruto Archipelago Transfer to Azura Benguerra Island. Beach activities, marine safaris, and diving.
- Day 7-9: Quirimbas Archipelago Fly to Quirimbas and stay at a luxury island resort. Snorkelling, dhow sailing, and island exploration.
- Day 10: Departure Morning at leisure, transfer to Pemba for departure.



Namibia

The Stark Beauty of the Desert

Where to Stay:

Little Kulala:

Situated near Sossusvlei, this lodge offers excursions to the iconic red dunes and stargazing opportunities.

Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp:

Located in one of the most remote areas of Namibia, this camp provides access to the unique desert-adapted wildlife and scenic flights over the Skeleton Coast.

Best Time to Visit

April to October. The cooler months are perfect for exploring the desert and its unique wildlife.

Tour Package:

Namib Desert Adventure

Duration: 8 Days / 7 Nights

Itinerary:

- Day 1-2: Windhoek Arrival and Sossusvlei Arrival in Windhoek, transfer to Little Kulala. Sunset dune walks and stargazing.
- Day 3-4: Dune Excursions and Dead Vlei Early morning excursions to Sossusvlei and Deadvlei. Hot air balloon rides over the desert.
- Day 5-7: Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp Transfer to Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp. Desert-adapted wildlife safaris, and scenic flights over the Skeleton Coast.
- Day 8: Departure Morning wildlife viewing, transfer to Windhoek for departure.

Zambia

The Untamed Wilderness

Where to Stay:

Chinzombo Camp:

Located in South Luangwa National Park, this camp offers luxurious villas and expert-guided walking safaris.

Tongabezi Lodge:

Situated near Victoria Falls, this lodge offers river cruises and excursions to the falls.

Best Time to Visit:

May to October: The dry season is best for walking safaris and viewing Victoria Falls in full flow.

Tour Package:

Victoria Falls & Luangwa

Walking Safari

Duration: 9 Days / 8 Nights

Itinerary:

- Day 1-2: Livingstone and Victoria Falls
Arrival in Livingstone, transfer to Tongabezi Lodge. Guided tour of Victoria Falls, sunset river cruise.
- Day 3-5: South Luangwa National Park
Fly to South Luangwa, and transfer to Chinzombo Camp. Walking safaris, night drives, and wildlife viewing.
- Day 6-8: Lower Zambezi National Park
Transfer to a luxury lodge in Lower Zambezi. Canoe safaris, fishing, and game drives.
- Day 9: Departure
Morning game drive, transfer to Lusaka for departure.

Zimbabwe

The Return of the Great Safari

Where to Stay:

Linkwasha Camp:

Located in Hwange National Park, this camp provides luxurious tents and excellent wildlife viewing opportunities.

Matetsi Victoria Falls:

Situated along the Zambezi River, this lodge offers boat cruises and helicopter tours over the falls.

Best Time to Visit:

May to October:

The dry season is ideal for game viewing and exploring Victoria Falls.

Tour Package:

Itinerary:

- Day 1-3: Hwange National Park
Arrival in Victoria Falls, transfer to Linkwasha Camp. Game drives, bush walks, and birdwatching.
- Day 4-6: Victoria Falls
Transfer to Matetsi Victoria Falls. Guided tours of the falls, Zambezi River cruises, and helicopter tours.
- Day 7: Departure
Morning safari, transfer to Victoria Falls Airport for departure.

Southern Africa is a land of contrasts, where every destination offers a bespoke safari adventure tailored to the discerning traveller. From the wetlands of Botswana to the deserts of Namibia, the vibrant landscapes of South Africa, the untamed wilds of Zimbabwe.

An aerial photograph of a Zimbabwean landscape. A river flows through the scene, bordered by dense, lush green and yellowish-brown forest. In the foreground, a small building with a thatched roof is nestled among the trees. The overall scene is serene and natural.

Zimbabwe experiences worth travelling beyond the obvious for

Distinctive experience, strong sense of
place, itinerary worthy



Masumu River Lodge — Binga

Why We Picked It

For discovering the other side of Lake Kariba. Most international itineraries gravitate towards Kariba's eastern safari circuit. Masumu instead places the traveller high above the western waters around Binga, with panoramic views across the lake and islands. The attraction is as much the journey, Tonga country and sense of remoteness as the lodge itself. This is exactly the sort of place that makes a repeat visitor feel they have discovered another Zimbabwe. (Masumu River Lodge)

Best For

Culture • Lake • Road Trip • Couples • Off-beat

Contact / Website

www.masumu.com • bookings@masumu.com
+263 781 972929 (Instagram • Binga")



Seldomseen Holiday Cottages — Bvumba

Why We Picked It

For disappearing into the forest. This is not polished resort tourism, and that is precisely its appeal. Self catering cottages sit among secluded Bvumba gardens with views towards Mozambique, while forest paths and exceptional birdlife begin virtually at the doorstep. For birders, writers, families and travellers wanting silence rather than facilities, it has enormous character. (Seldom Seen)

Best For

Birding • Forest • Self-drive • Family • Slow Travel

Contact / Website

seldomseen.co.zw • +263 712 610388



Gohori Resort — Mutoko

Why We Picked It

For making Mutoko part of the journey rather than somewhere you drive through. Mutoko rarely appears in international Zimbabwe itineraries, yet the surrounding area brings together granite landscapes, heritage and a very different rural Zimbabwe experience. Nyamakwere provides an accessible base from which a buyer could begin packaging this overlooked eastern corridor. (Gohori)

Best For

Culture • Road Trip • Domestic • Diaspora
• Off-beat

Contact / Website

www.gohoriresort.com
• reservations@nyamakwere.co.zw
• gohoriresort@gmail.com • +263 785 656 337
/ +263 77 240 5274. (Gohori)



Shashani Lodge — Matobo

Why We Picked It

For waking up inside one of Zimbabwe's strangest and most beautiful landscapes. Shashani sits in a private reserve beside the Matobo area, with accommodation looking across granite dwalas and wooded valleys. Ancient rock paintings and historic sites can be explored nearby, allowing a stay to combine scenery, archaeology, culture and wildlife instead of reducing Matobo to a day excursion from Bulawayo. (Shashani Lodge)

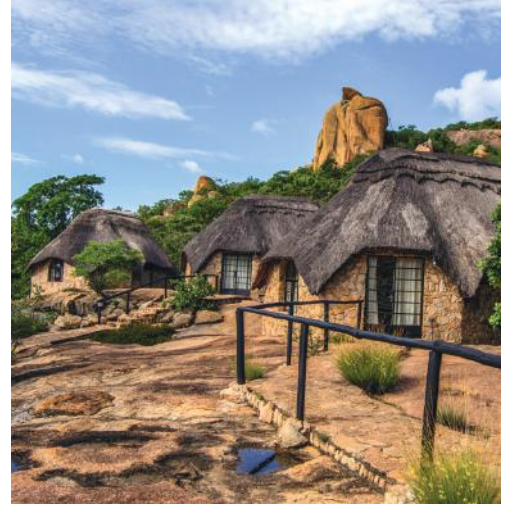
Best For

Landscape • Culture • History • Couples
• Self-drive

Contact / Website

shashanilodge.com





Mana Pools Safari Lodge — Mana Pools

Why We Picked It

For a different way into one of Africa's great wilderness areas. It is less internationally hyped than the premium tented camps surrounding it, yet its position on the lower-Zambezi floodplain gives guests direct access to the very thing they travelled to Mana Pools for: open wilderness, walking and wildlife. It is also a permanent lodge rather than another seasonal luxury camp. (Mana Pools Safari Lodge)

Best For

Wilderness • Walking • Safari • Repeat Africa

Contact / Website

manapoolssafarilodge.com
zambezi.cruisesafaris.com
• info@zambezi.cruisesafaris.com
+263 86 8800 2309
(Zambezi Cruise Safaris)



Far & Wide / Wild Nyanga — Nyanga

Why We Picked It

For travellers who want to do the landscape, not merely look at it. Far & Wide ranges from simple camping and cottages to more elevated stays, but the real reason to pick it is access to the mountains and outdoor experiences around Nyanga and Mutarazi.

This is accommodation as a base for exploration rather than the destination being contained inside the hotel gates. (Far and Wide)

Best For

Adventure • Family • Hiking • Self-drive
• Active Travel

Contact / Website

farandwide.co.zw / wildnyanga.com
• info@farandwide.co.zw • +263 78 3883150



Matobo Hills Lodge — Matobo National Park

Why We Picked It

For sleeping inside the landscape rather than visiting it for two hours. The lodge sits inside Matobo National Park and combines granite scenery with on-foot rhino tracking, San rock art, World's View and opportunities for cultural encounters. That turns Matobo into a two or three-night destination instead of the usual Bulawayo day trip. (Matobo Hills Lodge)

Best For

Rhino • Rock Art • Culture • Walking
• Landscape

Contact / Website

matobohillslodge.co.zw
(Matobo Hills Lodge)





Miombo Mountain Lodge — Harare outskirts

Why We Picked It

For changing what a night in Harare can be. Only about 25 minutes from the city center, Miombo gives travelers the atmosphere of bush accommodation without requiring another domestic flight or a long transfer. It is particularly interesting for stopovers, families and business travellers who have already done conventional Harare hotels. (Zimbabwe Tourism)

Best For

Harare Escape • Family • Bleisure • Short Stay

Contact / Website

<https://miombomountainlodge.com>
• reservations@miombomountainlodge.com
• +263 779883773 • (Miombo)



Chengeta Safari Lodge — Selous

Why We Picked It

For proving that safari does not have to begin with a flight to Hwange. Close enough to Harare to work as an overnight escape or the opening chapter of a Zimbabwe itinerary, Chengeta offers game drives, bush experiences and other activities without the logistics of a remote safari camp. That makes it particularly useful for diaspora families and business travellers adding leisure to a Harare visit. (Zambezi Cruise Safaris)

Best For

Short Safari • Family • Diaspora • Bleisure
• Weekend

Contact / Website

zambezcruisesafaris.com
• info@zambezcruisesafaris.com
• +263 86 8800 2309
• +263 780 105858. (Zambezi Cruise Safaris)



► Getting Around

From touchdown to the open road

- Car Hire • Airport Transfers
- Safari Mobility



From touchdown to the open road

• Car Hire • Airport Transfers • Safari Mobility

Avis Zimbabwe

Coverage
Harare • Victoria Falls / national

Why Include Them

Recognisable international-standard option for conventional airport collection and established rental processes.

Best For
Airport • Self-drive • Business • International

Contact
sales@avis.co.zw

Website
<https://www.avis.co.zw/>

Europcar Zimbabwe

Coverage
Harare • Victoria Falls

Why Include Them

Established rental brand with airport presence at Zimbabwe's principal international tourism gateways.

Best For
Airport • Self-drive • International • Business

Contact
Victoria Falls: +263 712 601491
• vicfalls@europcar.co.zw

Website
<https://www.europcarzimbabwe.com/>

Mufambi Rent A Car

Coverage
Harare • Bulawayo • Victoria Falls

Why Include Them

Useful for building an independent Zimbabwe road trip, with airport pickup/drop-off and SUV/4x4 options.

Best For
Road Trip • 4x4 • Family • Airport

Contact
+263 771 141 444

Website
<https://www.mufambi.co.zw/>

iNdlovu Car Rental & Safari

Coverage
Nationwide

Why Include Them

Tourism-focused mobility with airport pickup, nationwide vehicle delivery, SUVs double cabs and driver-guided touring.

Best For
Safari • Self-drive • 4x4 • Road Trip

Contact
+263 772 913 538

Website
<https://indlovucarandsafari.co.zw/>

Rockshade Car Rentals & Tours

Coverage
Harare • Victoria Falls

Why Include Them

Combines airport access with daily, weekly and longer-term rental options for touring Zimbabwe.

Best For
Self-drive • Airport • Longer Stay • Touring

Contact
Harare Airport: +263 242 575212

Website
<https://rockshade.co.zw/>

Mukanya Car Rental

Coverage
Victoria Falls

Why Include Them

Tourism-specific option offering self-drive, chauffeur service, airport transfers, safari 4x4s, camping equipment and group transport.

Best For
Victoria Falls • Safari • 4x4 • Camping • Groups

Contact
Available on official site

Website
<https://mukanyacarrental.co.zw/>

Vic Falls Transfers

Coverage
Victoria Falls • Hwange • regional

Why Include Them

For travellers who prefer not to drive: airport meet and-greet, lodge transfers, group transport and regional cross-border journeys.

Best For
Airport Transfer • Lodge Transfer • Groups
• Cross-border

Contact
+263 787 300443 • info@vicfallstransfers.co.zw

Website
<https://vicfallstransfers.co.zw/>

Victoria Falls Airport Taxis

Coverage
Victoria Falls Airport

Why Include Them

Straightforward airport-to-hotel transport for arriving visitors and short local journeys.

Best For
Airport • Hotel Transfer • Short Journeys

Contact
info@vicfallsairporttaxi.com

Website
<https://www.vicfallsairporttaxi.com/>





► Zimbabwe Accommodation Master Guide

Victoria Falls & Zambezi —

Accommodation Master Guide

Matetsi Victoria Falls

Why Stay Here

For travellers who want Victoria Falls and a private safari in one stay. Its position on a private Zambezi reserve makes it possible to combine river, wildlife, luxury and the Falls without constantly changing properties.

Website / Contact
matetsivictoriafalls.com
• bookings@matetsivictoriafalls.com
• +263 8677 004779 Marketing: Sara Gardiner,
sara@matetsivictoriafalls.com

Best For
Ultra-luxury • Honeymoon • Family • Private Safari

Ilala Lodge Hotel

Why Stay Here

For guests who actually want to walk to Victoria Falls. Its strength is location: a polished boutique style stay that puts restaurants, activities and the Falls close at hand without isolating the guest in a resort.

Website / Contact
ilalalodge.com • Agent reservations:
reservations@ilalalodge.co.zw
• +263 83 2844737/8/9

Best For
Fit • Couples • Family • First timers

Victoria Falls Safari Club

Why Stay Here

For clients who like the Safari Lodge concept but want greater privacy and service. The Club adds a boutique environment, dedicated dining and concierge style service.

Website / Contact
Same Victoria Falls Safari Collection trade contacts above.

Best For
Premium Fit • Couples • Special Occasions

The Victoria Falls Hotel

Why Stay Here

For the classic Victoria Falls experience. One of the destination's defining heritage hotels, with the advantage of being in town and close to the Falls rather than requiring guests to commute from a remote safari property.

Website / Contact
victoriafallshotel.com
• reservations@victoriafallshotel.com
• +263 83 2844751/9

Best For
Heritage • Couples • Luxury • Groups • First-timers

Palm River Hotel

Why Stay Here

For contemporary Zambezi-side resort living. A strong choice for guests who want the river and landscaped luxury without necessarily wanting a traditional tented safari camp.

Website / Contact
palmriverhotel.com • enquiries via official hotel site;
property is on the Zambezi and positioned as five star accommodation

Best For
Premium Leisure • Couples • Family • Events

Victoria Falls Safari Suites

Why Stay Here

For families and friends who need space. Two and three bedroom configurations solve a genuine itinerary problem for multigenerational families and small groups who do not want several disconnected hotel rooms.

Website / Contact
victoria-falls-safari-collection.com
Travel Trade: anald@vfsl.co.zw

Best For
Families • Groups • Diaspora • Longer Stays

Anantara Stanley & Livingstone Victoria Falls Hotel

Why Stay Here

For intimate hotel luxury with safari on the doorstep. A boutique alternative to Victoria Falls' bigger resorts, now carrying the Anantara international luxury brand and access to the Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve.

Website / Contact
anantara.com/en/stanley and livingstone
victoria-falls • stanley.livingstone@anantara.com
• +263 773 486183

Best For
Luxury • Couples • Honeymoon • Safari + Falls

Victoria Falls Safari Lodge

Why Stay Here

For the safari feeling without leaving Victoria Falls. Its waterhole-facing setting gives guests wildlife and sunset atmosphere while remaining only a short distance from the Falls.

Website / Contact
palmriverhotel.com • enquiries via official hotel site;
property is on the Zambezi and positioned as five star accommodation

Best For
Safari • First-timers • Couples • Groups • Fit

Lokuthula Lodges

Why Stay Here

For families who value independence. Self-catering gives Victoria Falls a much-needed option for longer stays, families and diaspora travellers who do not want every meal and service packaged into a luxury hotel rate.

Website / Contact
victoria-falls-safari-collection.com
• +263 83 2843202

Best For
Family • Self-catering • Diaspora • Groups

Albida – Victoria Falls

Why Stay Here

For travellers wanting something more private than conventional hotel. The newest boutique proposition within the Victoria Falls Safari Collection offers villas, private terraces/plunge pools and included experiences.

Website / Contact
victoria-falls-safari-collection.com
• Trade: anald@vfsl.co.zw.

Best For
Private Travel • Couples • Families • Premium

Victoria Falls Safari Suites

Why Stay Here

For families and friends who need space. Two and three bedroom configurations solve a genuine itinerary problem for multigenerational families and small groups who do not want several disconnected hotel rooms.

Website / Contact
victoria-falls-safari-collection.com
• Travel Trade: anald@vfsl.co.zw.

Best For
Families • Groups • Diaspora • Longer Stays

A'Zambezi River Lodge

Why Stay Here

For a full service Zambezi resort at a more accessible level than the private luxury camps. Particularly practical for groups and travellers wanting a recognised hotel structure right beside the river.

Website / Contact
rtgafrica.com/a-zambezi-river-lodge
• reservations.azambezi@rtg.co.zw
• +263 83 2844561-9.

Best For
Groups • Family • Leisure • Mice

Accommodation Master Guide

Victoria Falls Rainbow Hotel

Why Stay Here

For travellers who want Victoria Falls without paying luxury-safari prices. It gives operators a recognised full service hotel product in an otherwise heavily premium destination.

Website / Contact

rtgafrica.com/victoria-falls-rainbow-hotel
• reservations.vfrh@rtg.co.zw • +263 83 2844651-4.

Best For

Mid-market • Groups • Regional • Fit

Cresta Sprayview

Why Stay Here

For dependable, trade-friendly accommodation close to the Falls. Particularly useful for packaged tours, conferences and groups where location and operational simplicity matter more than resort extravagance.

Website / Contact

crestahotels.com • enquiry@crestahotels.com
• Functions: functions@sprayview.cresta.co.zw
+263 775145102.

Best For

Groups • Mid-market • Mice • Fit

Elephant Hills Resort & Conference Centre

Why Stay Here

For scale. This is a major option where a buyer needs bedrooms, conferencing and leisure facilities together rather than an intimate lodge.

Website / Contact

africansunhotels.com
• reservations@ehr.africansun.co.zw
• +263 8328 44793/9.

Best For

Mice • Incentives • Large Groups • Golf

The Elephant Camp

Why Stay Here

For a tented safari atmosphere without giving up access to Victoria Falls. It works well where the client wants the emotional feel of safari as part of the Falls stay.

Website / Contact

Wild Horizons lodge portfolio / official Elephant Camp channels.

Best For

Honeymoon • Couples • Luxury • Wilderness

Somalisa Acacia

Why Stay Here

For families who do not want to compromise on safari quality. It provides a family-orientated counterpart to Somalisa and makes Hwange easier to sell to multigenerational travellers.

Website / Contact

African Bush Camps
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For

Family • Multigenerational • Safari

Old Drift Lodge

Why Stay Here

For guests who want to sleep inside the wilderness rather than in town. Zambezi National Park location creates a river-and-safari experience that still works as a Victoria Falls base.

Website / Contact

Wild Horizons / olddriftlodge.com

Best For

Couples • Safari • Falls • Premium Fit

The Wallow Lodge

Why Stay Here

For a smaller, quieter Victoria Falls stay. A good boutique alternative for repeat visitors who have already experienced the larger destination hotels.

Website / Contact

Wild Horizons / wildhorizons.co.za

Best For

Couples • Boutique • Return Visitors

The Hide Safari Camp

Why Stay Here

For wildlife that comes to the guest. The Hide's reputation centres on its productive waterhole and underground viewing hide particularly valuable to photographers and guests who want superb viewing even between drives.

Website / Contact

thehide.com • bookings@thehide.com
• +263 774 724412

Best For

Photography • Family • First Safari • Wildlife

Somalisa Camp

Why Stay Here

For close encounters with Hwange's elephants. A polished African Bush Camps experience that combines a small luxury camp with strong wildlife viewing.

Website / Contact

africanbushcamps.com
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For

Premium Safari • Couples • Wildlife

Somalisa Expeditions

Why Stay Here

For the traveller who wants safari stripped back to its essentials. A more expedition-led proposition for buyers looking beyond highly polished lodge experiences.

Website / Contact

African Bush Camps
• contact@africanbushcamps.com

Best For

Adventure • Safari Purists • Repeat Africa

Wilderness Linkwasha

Why Stay Here

For some of Hwange's strongest all-round game viewing. Positioned beside the productive Ngamo Plains and backed by Wilderness' regional network, making it particularly easy to combine with Botswana or Zambia.

Website / Contact

wildernessdestinations.com
• enquiry@wildernessdestinations.com • Partnerships: partnerships@wildernessdestinations.com.

Best For

Luxury • Predators • Regional Circuits

Wilderness Little Makalolo

Why Stay Here

For intimacy and the classic Hwange experience. Smaller scale and a strong safari legacy make it appropriate for clients who value wilderness over hotel-style facilities.

Website / Contact

Wilderness contacts above

Best For

Couples • Safari Purists • Wildlife

Wilderness Davison's

Why Stay Here

For a more understated way into Wilderness' Hwange circuit. Strong game drives and elephant country without needing the highest tier of camp.

Website / Contact

Wilderness
• enquiry@wildernessdestinations.com

Best For

Couples • Safari Circuits • Value-luxury

Ivory Lodge

Why Stay Here

For a relaxed, accessible Hwange safari with excellent waterhole viewing. One of the properties that helps bridge the gap between luxury fly-in camps and mainstream lodge travel.

Website / Contact

amalindacollection.com
• enquiries@amalindacollection.co.zw
• +263 29 2243954/46430 • Sales/Marketing: savannah@amalindacollection.co.zw.

Best For

Family • Self-drive • Photography • Mid-premium

Khulu Bush Camp

Why Stay Here

For a smaller and more exclusive Amalinda Collection experience. Elevated rooms and private-concession waterhole viewing make it a natural upgrade from Ivory Lodge

Website / Contact

Same Amalinda contacts.

Best For

Couples • Honeymoon • Boutique Safari

Accommodation Master Guide

Sable Valley

Why Stay Here

For the traveller who wants Hwange atmosphere without excessive formality. A classic safari proposition with photographic-hide appeal.

Website / Contact
Amalinda Collection
• enquiries@amalindacollection.co.zw.

Best For
Photography • Couples • Classic Safari

Bomani Tented Lodge

Why Stay Here

For access to southern Hwange's Ngamo ecosystem and an excellent Zimbabwe safari without ultra luxury pricing. Particularly attractive in a road/rail or multi-camp itinerary.

Website / Contact
imvelosafarilodges.com
• res1@imvelosafarilodges.com
• +263 783 568632.

Best For
Family • Couples • Value Safari • Circuits

Camelthorn Lodge

Why Stay Here

For clients who prefer permanent villas to canvas. Eight forest villas create a more lodge like interpretation of safari while retaining access to the Ngamo area.

Website / Contact
Imvelo • res1@imvelosafarilodges.com

Best For
Couples • Family • Comfort-led Safari

Nehimba Lodge

Why Stay Here

For remoteness and elephants. Its position in a less accessed part of Hwange is the selling point; it suits guests who want to feel genuinely removed from busy tourism circuits.

Website / Contact
Imvelo
• res1@imvelosafarilodges.com.

Best For
Repeat Safari • Wildlife • Couples

Wilderness Little Ruckomechi

Why Stay Here

For maximum intimacy. A smaller-format choice for travellers who have already done conventional safari and value exclusivity over facilities.

Website / Contact
Wilderness contacts above.

Best For
Private Travel • Couples • Repeat Safari

Hwange Safari Lodge

Why Stay Here

For a straightforward road-based Hwange safari. Important because Hwange should not appear to be accessible only to guests spending four figures per night.

Website / Contact
africansunhotels.com
• African Sun reservations/contact channels.

Best For
Groups • Self-drive • Regional • First Safari

Nyamatusi Camp

Why Stay Here

For luxurious Mana Pools without losing the wilderness. A Zambezi-side base combining premium accommodation with land and river safari.

Website / Contact
africanbushcamps.com
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For
Luxury • Walking • Couples • Conservation

Nyamatusi Mahogany

Why Stay Here

For taking the family to Mana Pools. It opens a destination often regarded as adventurous/adult orientated to families needing a more tailored environment.

Website / Contact
African Bush Camps
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For
Family • Multigenerational • Premium Safari

Kanga Camp

Why Stay Here

For an armchair safari. Its inland pan draws wildlife towards camp, meaning the property itself becomes part of the game-viewing experience.

Website / Contact
African Bush Camps
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For
Photography • Wildlife • Relaxed Safari

Wilderness Ruckomechi

Why Stay Here

For a complete Zambezi safari. Land-based game viewing can be combined with time on the river, giving clients more variety than a conventional game-drive-only itinerary.

Website / Contact
wildernessdestinations.com
• enquiry@wildernessdestinations.com.

Best For
Premium • Elephants • River • Couples

Wilderness Chikwenya

Why Stay Here

For floodplains, Zambezi scenery and wildlife together. The landscape itself is central to the experience, making it particularly strong for photography and slow safari.

Website / Contact
Wilderness
• enquiry@wildernessdestinations.com.

Best For
Photography • Couples • Premium Safari

Bumi Hills Safari Lodge

Why Stay Here

For one of Zimbabwe's great views. Elevated above Lake Kariba, Bumi combines safari with boating and the restorative quality of a lake stay — an excellent contrast to dusty land safari.

Website / Contact
africanbushcamps.com
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For
Luxury • Honeymoon • Relaxation • Safari

Changa Safari Camp

Why Stay Here

For an intimate Matusadona safari at water level. Boating and fishing give operators another dimension to mix with conventional wildlife viewing.

Website / Contact
changasafaricamp.com

Best For
Couples • Family • Fishing • Safari

Musango Safari Camp

Why Stay Here

For owner-led character and natural history. Particularly well suited to travellers who want interpretation, boating and fishing alongside wildlife rather than an anonymous luxury resort experience.

Website / Contact
musangosafaricamp.com

Best For
Family • Natural History • Fishing • Fit

Fothergill Island

Why Stay Here

For contemporary Kariba luxury. A useful premium option for buyers who want the lake to be a destination in its own right rather than merely a stop between safari areas.

Website / Contact
fothergill.travel

Best For
Premium • Couples • Family • Water based Safari

Accommodation Master Guide

Amalinda Lodge

Why Stay Here

For one of Zimbabwe's most extraordinary landscapes. Accommodation integrated among Matobo's granite formations creates an experience rooted in geology, culture, history and wilderness rather than a conventional safari lodge.

Website / Contact
amalindacollection.com
• enquiries@amalindacollection.co.zw • Sales/
Marketing: savannah@amalindacollection.co.zw.

Best For
Culture • Couples • History • Photography

Bulawayo Rainbow Hotel

Why Stay Here

For scale and practicality in Zimbabwe's second city. Particularly valuable during Sanganai and for groups connecting Bulawayo with Matobo and Hwange.

Website / Contact
rtgafrica.com
• 181-room inventory documented by RTG.

Best For
Business • Mice • Groups • Regional

Cresta Churchill

Why Stay Here

For character rather than a generic city hotel. Its English-country styling gives it an identity while still functioning for corporate, group and leisure travellers.

Website / Contact
crestahotels.com • Functions:
functions@churchill.cresta.co.zw • +263 788671500

Best For
Business • Culture • Groups • Boutique-city

Holiday Inn Bulawayo

Why Stay Here

For international-brand familiarity in Bulawayo. Useful for corporates, first-time travellers and operators who prioritise predictable hotel standards.

Website / Contact
African Sun / IHG. African Sun confirms the property remains in its current portfolio.

Best For
Business • Groups • Fit • Mice

Troutbeck Resort

Why Stay Here

For Zimbabwe's mountain-resort experience. Nyanga scenery and outdoor leisure create an entirely different Zimbabwe proposition from safari useful for families, retreats and soft adventure.

Website / Contact
africansunhotels.com • official African Sun
reservation channels

Best For
Family • Golf • Couples • Diaspora

Hwange Safari Lodge

Why Stay Here

For a straightforward road-based Hwange safari. Important because Hwange should not appear to be accessible only to guests spending four figures per night.

Website / Contact
africansunhotels.com
• African Sun reservations/contact channels.

Best For
Groups • Self-drive • Regional • First Safari

Nyamatusi Camp

Why Stay Here

For luxurious Mana Pools without losing the wilderness. A Zambezi-side base combining premium accommodation with land and river safari.

Website / Contact
africanbushcamps.com
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For
Luxury • Walking • Couples • Conservation

Nyamatusi Mahogany

Why Stay Here

For taking the family to Mana Pools. It opens a destination often regarded as adventurous/adult orientated to families needing a more tailored environment.

Website / Contact
African Bush Camps
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For
Family • Multigenerational • Premium Safari

Kanga Camp

Why Stay Here

For an armchair safari. Its inland pan draws wildlife towards camp, meaning the property itself becomes part of the game-viewing experience.

Website / Contact
African Bush Camps
• contact@africanbushcamps.com.

Best For
Photography • Wildlife • Relaxed Safari

Wilderness Ruckomechi

Why Stay Here

For a complete Zambezi safari. Land-based game viewing can be combined with time on the river, giving clients more variety than a conventional game-drive-only itinerary.

Website / Contact
wildernessdestinations.com
• enquiry@wildernessdestinations.com.

Best For
Premium • Elephants • River • Couples

Leopard Rock Hotel

Why Stay Here

For old-world mountain glamour and golf. The Vumba setting makes the journey itself part of the stay and provides a strong landscape-led alternative to safari.

Website / Contact
leopardrockhotel.com
• reservations@leopardrockhotel.com • +263 8677 100700

Best For
Golf • Couples • Heritage • Retreats

Aberfoyle Lodge

Why Stay Here

For Honde Valley rather than headline Zimbabwe. Tea estates, forest, birding and an intimate lodge setting make it exactly the kind of lesser-known property international buyers value discovering at a trade show.

Website / Contact
aberfoylelodge.com • bookings@aberfoylelodge.com
• +263 780935345.

Best For
Birding • Nature • Couples • Soft Adventure

Musangano Lodge

Why Stay Here

For independent travellers exploring the Eastern Highlands by road. Lodges, family accommodation and its position near Mutare make it particularly useful for multi-stop itineraries rather than expensive fly-in tourism.

Website / Contact
musangano.com • reservations@musangano.com
• info@musangano.com • +263 772119447 /
+263 712320327.

Best For
Self-drive • Family • Culture • Nature

Holiday Inn Mutare

Why Stay Here

For a practical Eastern Highlands gateway. Not every client wants a resort: it gives business and touring guests an internationally recognisable base from which to explore Mutare, Vumba and surrounding areas.

Website / Contact
African Sun / IHG
• africansunhotels.com.

Best For
Business • Groups • Fit • Gateway

Fothergill Island

Why Stay Here

For contemporary Kariba luxury. A useful premium option for buyers who want the lake to be a destination in its own right rather than merely a stop between safari areas.

Website / Contact
fothergill.travel

Best For Premium • Couples • Family • Water
based Safari

Accommodation Master Guide



THE SHRUB LODGE

More info

Journey into Elegance: The Shrub Lodge,
Where Luxury Awaits

Hyatt Regency Harare The Meikles Why Stay Here

For a premium introduction to Zimbabwe. A logical first or final night for high-value leisure clients and one of Harare's strongest options for international corporate and diplomatic travel.

Website / Contact
hyatt.com

Best For
Luxury • Business • Fit • Diplomatic

Rainbow Towers Hotel & Conference Centre

Why Stay Here

For large-scale events and business travel. Its relevance is capacity and MICE infrastructure rather than boutique tourism.

Website / Contact
musangano.com • reservations@musangano.com
• info@musangano.com • +263 772119447 /
+263 712320327.

Best For
Mice • Government • Business • Groups

Cresta Lodge Harare

Why Stay Here

For a quieter garden setting that still works for business. Useful to travellers who do not want to stay in the middle of the CBD while retaining corporate facilities.

Website / Contact
African Sun / IHG
• africansunhotels.com.

Best For
Business • Family • Groups • Fi

Cresta Oasis

Why Stay Here

For accessible city accommodation. An important inclusion because the guide should not imply that every international or diaspora traveller wants premium accommodation.

Website / Contact
crestahotels.com • functions@oasis.cresta.co.zw
/ +263 784211128.

Best For
Business • Value • Groups • Regional

Holiday Inn Harare

Why Stay Here

For international-brand familiarity and straightforward city accommodation. Particularly saleable to business travellers and first-time visitors who prefer a globally recognised hotel system.

Website / Contact
African Sun / IHG
• africansunhotels.com.

Best For
Corporate • Groups • Fit

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