



CEDARBERG AFRICA

Zimbabwe Country Guide

Wild Adventures & Ancient Wonders

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Zimbabwe

One of Africa's most rewarding safari destinations for travellers who value excellent guiding and genuinely immersive wildlife experiences.

Its game reserves vary from the game-rich savanna & woodland of Hwange to the watery reserves of Mana Pools and Lake Kariba.

Add in the drama of the Victoria Falls, the romance of the riverside Zambezi National Park and the history and mystery of Matobo Hills, and Zimbabwe offers a truly varied and exciting safari destination.



Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is ideal for travellers who want a safari that feels wild, expertly guided and less mainstream — often at better value than neighbouring Botswana



Key Attributes

- **World-class guiding**, especially for walking safaris
- **Uncrowded parks** with a genuine wilderness feel
- **Superb wildlife**: elephant, predator and wild dog viewing in Hwange and Mana Pools
- **Iconic Victoria Falls**, especially from April to August
- **Excellent value** compared with Botswana
- **Varied safari styles**: 4x4, walking, canoeing, boating and fishing

Important Tips

- **Peak Season**: July to October, most reserves open year round
- **Less expensive than Botswana** with comparable wildlife. Similar to Zambia but with some moderate options.
- **Walking safaris year-round** in most parks
- **Mix of Road/Flights** between Game Reserves
- **Good access** into Victoria Falls Airport & Harare



Top Reasons to Visit



Wild Uncrowded Reserves

Some of Africa's most authentic wilderness areas with minimal crowds

Superb Walking Safaris

Track wildlife on foot, sometimes including unforgettable elephant encounters in Mana Pools

Best Side of Victoria Falls

One of the Seven Natural Wonders with spectacular excursions

Africa's Finest Safari Guides

Zimbabwe's guides are internationally recognised as the best-trained in Africa

Rock Art & Ancient Culture

Great Zimbabwe ruins and San rock art in Matobo Hills

Big Safari Impact, Better Value

Incredible wildlife and guiding at good value compared to Botswana



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“

*Zimbabwe has her mysteries and even
a wise man cannot understand them.*

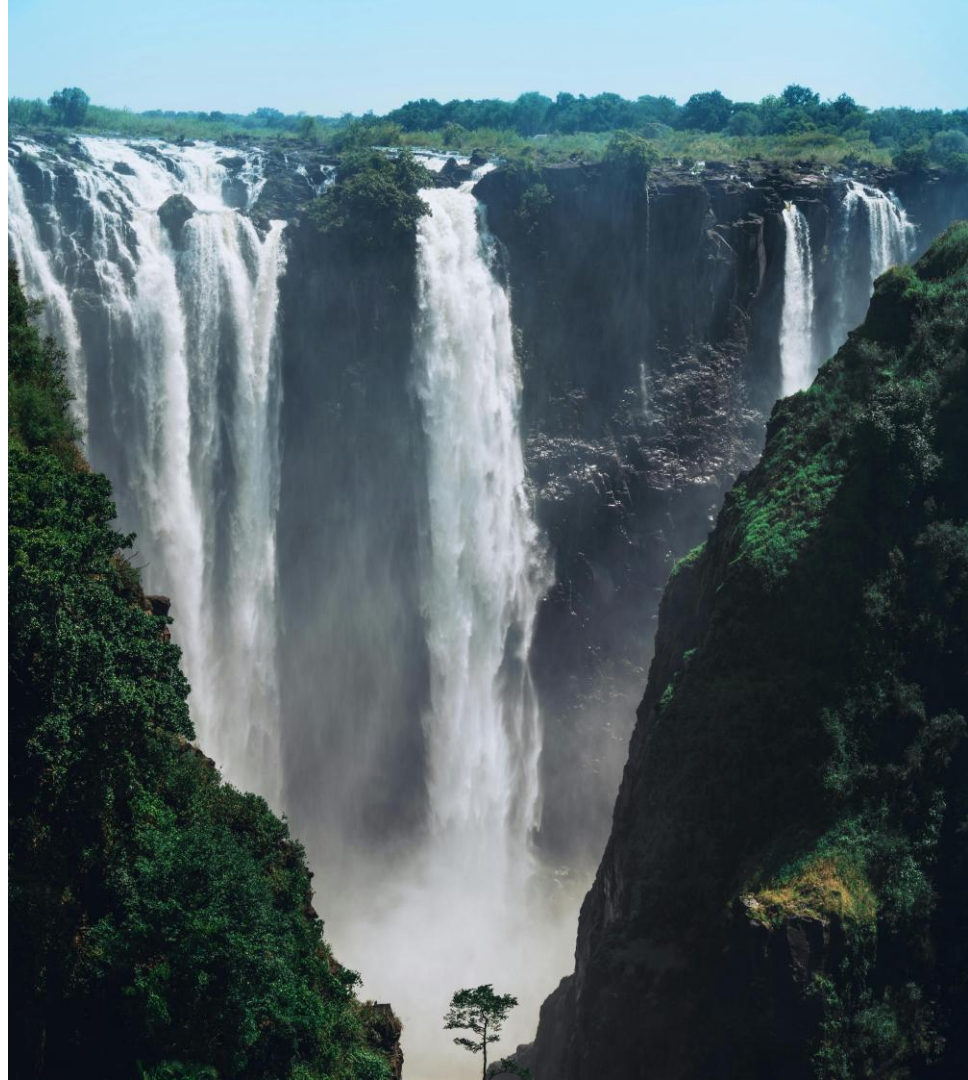
But a wise man respects them.

Zimbabwean Proverb



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Best Time to Visit



Best Time to Visit



Nov – March

Rainy “Green” season:

- Lush scenery but wildlife less easy to see
- Newborn animals
- Great for birding
- Photographers' paradise
- Keenest pricing
- Mana Pools/mainly closed

Victoria Falls

Oct-Dec: Not ideal time to visit

April - May (& Oct)

Shoulder Season:

- Dry sunny conditions
- Good combo of wildlife viewing & shoulder pricing
- Mana Pools camps open by May
- October excellent for game viewing but hot, so it suits experienced safari travellers

Victoria Falls

April-May: Strongest flow, not ideal for clear pics

June – Sept/Oct

Peak Season:

- Best wildlife viewing as less dense bush & animals drawn to rivers for water
- Pleasant daytime temperatures, Hwange is cold at night
- Best for walking safaris
- Peak season pricing

Victoria Falls

June-July - Sweet spot for best Falls



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Who Zimbabwe is best for

Zimbabwe is especially good for:

Safari returners, active travellers, photographers, walking safari enthusiasts, Victoria Falls visitors, and those wanting excellent guiding without Botswana-level prices.

Less Good for:

Ultra-polished luxury throughout, beach-and-bush combinations,

Planning a Zimbabwe safari?

We'll help you choose the right mix of Victoria Falls, Hwange, Mana Pools & beyond - based on your travel dates, budget and safari style.

[Chat to Us](#)



Destinations

• Victoria Falls • Hwange • Mana Pools

For seasoned travellers:

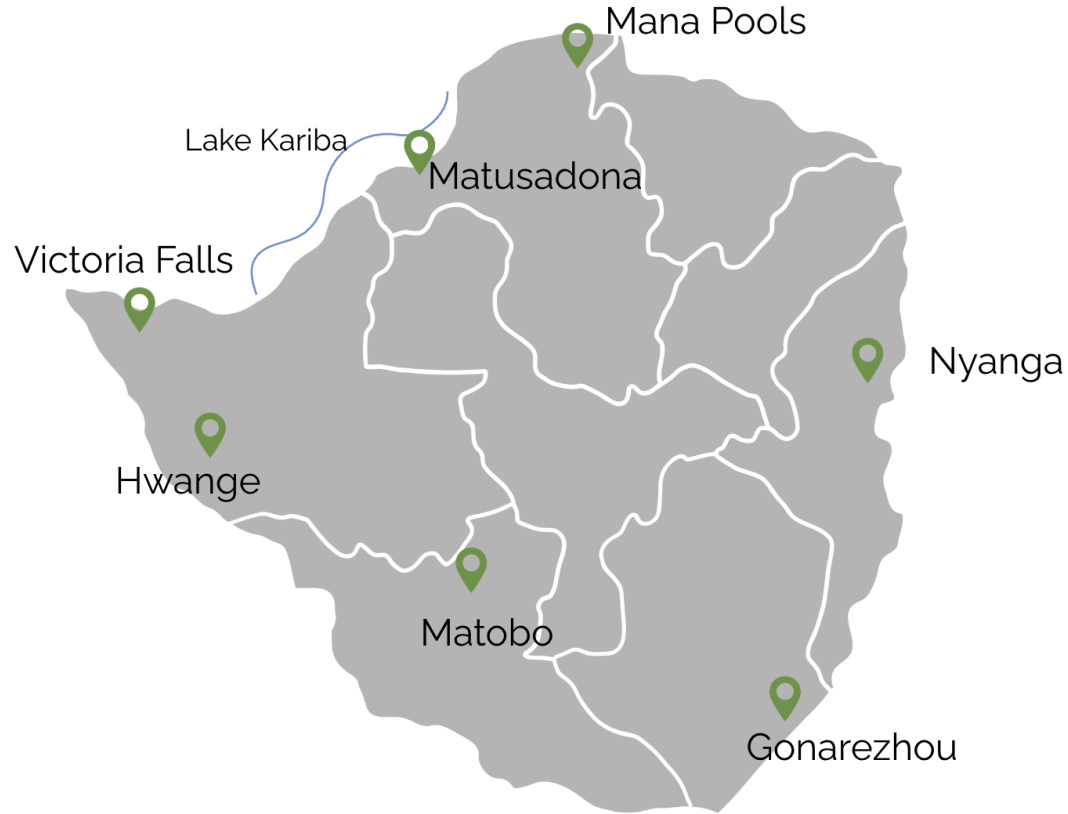
• Matobo Hills • Lake Kariba and Matusadaona



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Key Parks in Zimbabwe



Animals you can expect to see in Zimbabwe:

Abundant



Elephant



Hippo



Various
Birdlife



Red Lechwe



Onyx



Tsebebe



Eland



Hartebeest



Zebra



Lion



Cape Buffalo



Wildebeest



Crocodile



Leopard



Hyena

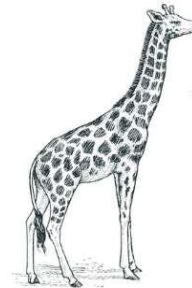


Warthog



Meerkat

Occasional



Giraffe



Vulture



Honey Badger



Baboon



Wild Dog



Mongoose



Armadillo



Ostrich



Fish Eagle

Rare



Rhino



Cheetah



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Victoria Falls

Zimbabwe side offers the most dramatic close-up Falls experience.
Combine a visit to both sides for the complete experience

- **Rainforest Walk** – experience the thundering power of the Falls with dramatic spray views
- **Adventure capital** - bungee jumping, gorge swing, zip-lining from Victoria Falls Bridge
- **Historic Victoria Falls Hotel** - colonial elegance since 1904
- **Zambezi National Park** - game drives just 4km from the Falls
- **Helicopter flights** - "Flight of Angels" over the Falls and Zambezi
- **Cultural experiences** - local village visits and traditional markets
- **Bridge activities** - bridge walk and bridge swing experiences
- **Best time:** April–Aug for full water flow and dramatic spray

CEDARBERG TIP – If photography is a priority, June to August often offers the best balance of spray and visibility.

Great Excursions to add in Victoria Falls



River Excursions

Sunset cruises on Zambezi,
white-water rafting, canoeing
on upper Zambezi

Adventure

Victoria Falls Canopy Tour,
Zip Line, Gorge Swing,
Flying Fox

Aerial Adventures

Helicopter flights ("Flight
of Angels"), scenic flights
over Batoka Gorge

Wildlife

Game Drives incl Big Five,
Rhino Sanctuary

Luxury Experiences

Bushtracks Express dinner
train, helicopter picnics,
exclusive sunset cruises

Cultural

Victoria Falls town tours,
craft markets, traditional
village visits



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Victoria Falls Seasonality — Quick Guide



High-water spectacle

Feb–May: thunderous flow, rainbows; heavier spray so pack a poncho.

Classic views

Jun–Aug: balanced spray and visibility - ideal for photography from both sides

Low-water adventure

Aug–Dec: clearer rock formations; prime time to visit Livingstone Island for Devil's Pool swim. Plus full-tilt white water rafting (conditions permitting)

Top tip

Stay 3 nights, providing enough time for both sides of the Falls, a helicopter flip, sunset cruise, and Zambezi National Park game drive.

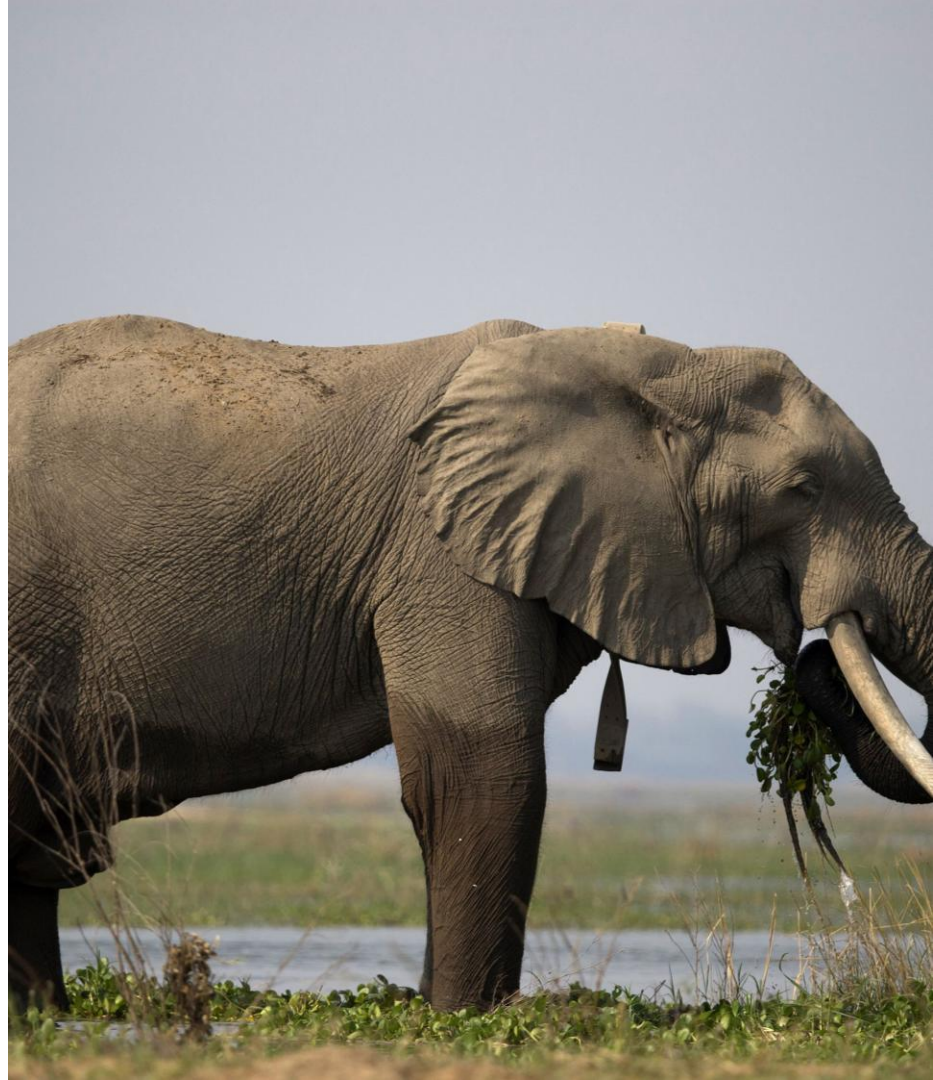
Note: See later appendix for month-by-month guide

Hwange

Fly from Victoria Falls - Zimbabwe's premier wildlife sanctuary

- **Africa's elephant capital** - home to over 40,000 elephants
- **Exceptional predator viewing** - particularly lions and wild dogs, can compete with the best
- **World-renowned guides** - Africa's toughest training
- **Authentic bush camps** with traditional safari atmosphere
- **Unique** - Walking close to larger wildlife
- **Access** - 1 hour flight from Victoria Falls, northern lodges can be accessed via road (3 hours)
- **Open** - Year round with permanent water sources

CEDARBERG TIP - Northern Hwange can work well by road from Victoria Falls, but mainly we recommend light aircraft transfers





Mana Pools National Park

The ultimate walking safari destination

- **UNESCO World Heritage Site** - pristine wilderness area
- **Expert Walking Safaris** – unforgettable elephant encounters & other wildlife on foot
- **Zambezi River frontage** - stunning scenery and varied activities
- **Expedition Camps** - sleep under African stars
- **Remote and authentic** – genuine wilderness ambience
- **Unique** – Canoe safaris on Zambezi river
- **Access:** Fly-in destination only, combine with Lake Kariba for some R&R afterwards
- **Open:** Most Camps open from May to Oct, Nyamatusi open year-round

CEDARBERG TIP – Mana Pools is magical, but it is not the cheapest add-on. It suits those who actively want walking, wilderness and remoteness

Other Destinations in Zimbabwe



Lake Kariba & Matusadona National Park

Africa's largest man-made reservoir by volume with spectacular sunsets

Elephant islands - watch herds swimming between islands

Houseboat safaris - unique floating accommodation

Tiger fishing - world-class angling in season

Matobo Hills

Ancient granite formations and San rock art

Black and white rhino tracking on foot

Cultural significance - Cecil Rhodes' burial site

Dramatic landscapes and spiritual atmosphere



Which Zimbabwe Safari is Right for You?

World-class guiding at authentic safari camps



Traveller Type

Best Combination

First Time Safari Visitor

Victoria Falls, Hwange & possibly Mana Pools

Safari Enthusiast

Hwange, Mana Pools & Possible Lake Kariba

Active/Adventurous Traveller

Victoria Falls (3 nights), Mana Pools, Walking Safaris

Slower-paced Luxury Traveller

Victoria Falls Riverfront Lodges, Mana Pools & Lake Kariba (Matusadona)

Cultural/Historical Interest

Victoria Falls (perhaps Livingstone side), Hwange & Matobo Hills

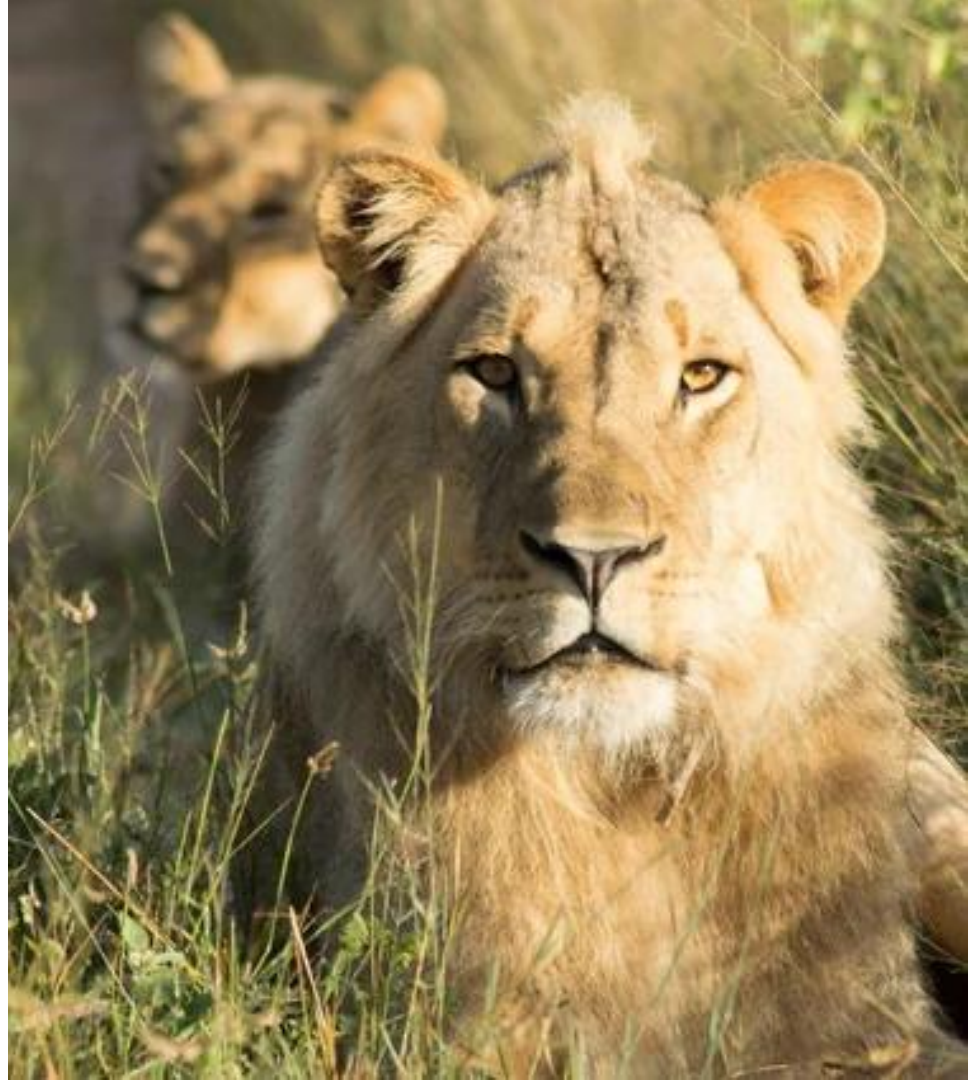
Multi-Country Safari

Cape Town, Victoria Falls & Hwange OR Okavango Delta, Victoria Falls & Hwange



Sample Safaris

Oh the places you'll go....



Sample Itineraries – Zimbabwe

Inspiration for your journey - we design each safari as unique as you are



Zimbabwe Safari Explorer

12 Nights

- Comprehensive Zimbabwe exploration covering five distinct regions
- Combines walking safaris, water activities, and traditional game drives
- Seasonal camp options available (May-October for full itinerary)
- Road and flight transfers showcase landscape diversity

Relaxing Zimbabwe Safari

9 Nights

- Unhurried three-night stays at each camp
- Victoria Falls and Zambezi River activities including canoeing and boating
- Two contrasting regions of Hwange National Park
- Iconic Elephant Express rail safari through Hwange
- Rhino conservation, elephant hides, and community experiences at Bomani

Zimbabwe Water & Wilderness

6 Nights

- Focused two-park safari showcasing Zimbabwe's contrasts
- Combines big game viewing with water-based activities
- Most Mana Pools camps operate April-October only
- Perfect introduction to Zimbabwe's wilderness

Specialist Itineraries – Zimbabwe

Inspiration for your journey - we design each safari as unique as you are



Family Safari in Bots/Zim

11 Nights

- Family-focused safari incl Okavango Delta, Gomoti Plains, Victoria Falls & Hwange
- All Machaba camps selected for family-friendly facilities and service
- Activities suitable for children of all ages
- Family rooms available at all properties

Victoria Falls & Chobe Safari

4 Nights

- Compact 4-night safari combining two countries
- Perfect introduction to both Victoria Falls and Chobe
- Various accommodation levels available to suit all budgets
- Easy extensions possible to Hwange or Mana Pools

Rovos Rail Victoria Falls

3/4 Nights

- Luxury train journey combining two countries
- Choice of suite categories and journey lengths
- Regular monthly departures with set dates
- Includes Hwange game drive experience
- Can be travelled in either direction, departing or arriving in Pretoria

Need to Know

Types of Accommodation
Safari Costs





First Time Visitors

How many nights do you need?

- **Victoria Falls:** ideally 3 nights for the full range of excursions and to see both sides
- **Hwange National Park:** 3-4 nights for elephant encounters and predator viewing
- **Recommended:** Mana Pools for scenery & walking safaris (3+ nights)
- **Optional add-on:** Lake Kariba for relaxation (2-3 nights) or Matobo for history/culture
- So 12+ nights to see four highlights

TIP - Start with Victoria Falls for the wow factor, then Hwange for classic game viewing & continue from there...



Zimbabwe Accommodation

World-class guiding at authentic safari camps



Safari Lodges & Camps

Authentic safari accommodation focusing on wilderness over luxury

Traditional safari atmosphere with campfire stories and bush dinners

Excellent value compared to neighbouring countries

Year-round operations at most major camps

Bush Camps

Intimate wilderness camps - often under 12 guests

Walking safari specialists - guides trained for foot safaris

Mobile camping options available in Mana Pools

Premium guiding - your guide becomes your host

Mid-to-high cost but exceptional value for expertise offered



Typical per night Safari Costs in Zimbabwe (per person sharing)

Zimbabwe offers excellent value, but it is not always a “cheap safari” once flights, park fees & private concessions are included. The best value is often found in Hwange, while Mana Pools and top riverside lodges tend to be more expensive.

	Green Season November – March	Shoulder April – June, Some Oct	Peak July – September
Victoria Falls	\$300-\$450 – <i>In Town options incl tours</i>	\$500-\$775 <i>Premier Riverside Lodges (FI)</i>	\$850-\$1 300 <i>Top Riverside Lodges in Park</i>
Affordable/Road & Limited Air	\$450-\$575 <i>(Mainly Hwange/Matobo)</i>	\$500 – \$850	\$525 – \$950
Premier	\$600-\$825 <i>(Many Camps closed)</i>	\$875 – \$1 050	\$975 – \$1 350
Top Camps	\$850-\$1 000 <i>(Many Camps closed)</i>	\$1 100 – \$1 400	\$1 375 – \$1 850*

NOTES: This typical per night price includes most meals (possible B&B at Victoria Falls), charter flights, park fees and road transfers

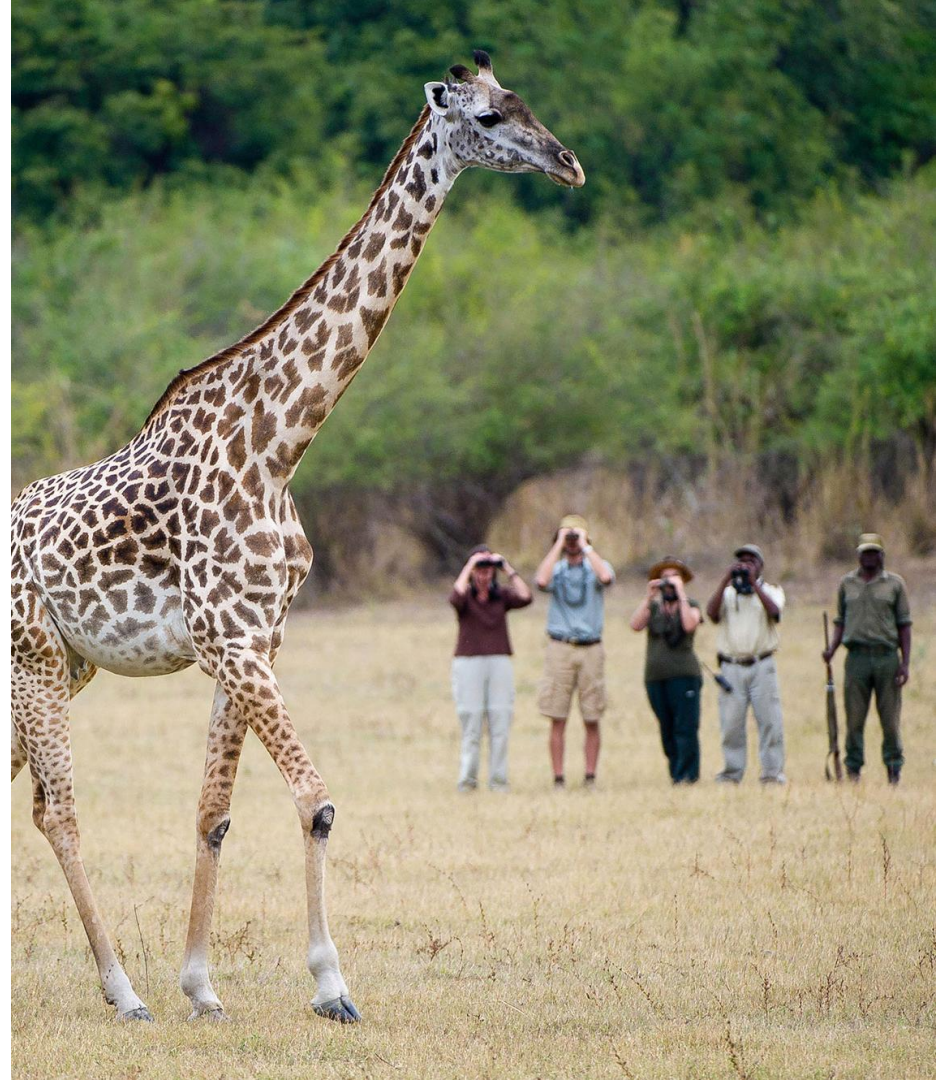


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Useful Zimbabwe Articles

Want to go deeper? These articles will help you compare Zimbabwe with nearby safari destinations and choose the right route.

- [Botswana vs Zambia vs Zimbabwe](#) – our 3-way comparison
- [Introducing Zambezi National Park](#)
- [Mana Pools vs Lower Zambezi](#) – how these game reserves on the Zambezi actually differ
- [10 Reasons to Visit Zimbabwe](#)
- [Kate's Photo Blog of Victoria Falls & Hwange](#) - from her trip
- [Best Tours at Victoria Falls](#) - top excursions/tours on both sides



General Info



Population

15 Million

Capital

Harare

Safari Season

Year-round destination with world-class guiding and authentic experiences

Population Density

Only 38 people per km²
(USA is 35, UK is 280)
Vast wilderness areas

Getting There

Daily flights from Johannesburg
to Victoria Falls and Harare

Official Language

English, Shona, Ndebele
World's best-trained guides
speak excellent English

Walking Safaris in Zimbabwe — How It Works



Why Zimbabwe walks are exceptional

Top guide training and
strict safety protocols

Where it shines:

Mana Pools (shoreline walks
& floodplain tracking),
Hwange private concessions
(pumped pan circuits).

Pace & distance

Tailored to fitness and
conditions; focus on tracks,
behaviour, and wind—not
mileage

Who it suits

Photographers, seasoned
safari-goers, families with
teens (typically 14+; lodge
rules vary).

Seasonality

Peak is May–Oct;
October heat can limit mid-
day walks; many Mana
camps close in rains.

Etiquette essentials

Single-file, quiet voices, follow
hand signals, no sudden
movements.



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Why Zimbabwe ...with Cedarberg Africa?

Authentic Wild Adventure

Experience Africa as it was meant to be - uncrowded, untamed, and utterly authentic. Zimbabwe's parks offer genuine wilderness encounters away from mass tourism. Passionate experts don't just spot wildlife - they share the stories, ecology, and cultural significance to bring Africa alive.

Exceptional Value

Enjoy world-class wildlife experiences at a significantly lower cost than Botswana.

Conservation Success Story

Your visit directly supports wildlife conservation and community development. Zimbabwe's tourism model ensures your safari contributes to protecting these precious ecosystems.

Why plan Zimbabwe with Cedarberg Africa?

Zimbabwe rewards good planning. The difference between an average trip and a superb one often comes down to choosing the right camp, the right season and the right guide. We know which areas combine well, when Mana Pools is worth the extra effort, and how to balance Victoria Falls with a true wilderness safari.



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We can't wait to welcome you!

We've been crafting tailor-made safaris across Southern & East Africa for over 30 years, and Zimbabwe represents safari authenticity at its finest, with the world's best-trained guides & offering exceptional value . From Victoria Falls' thundering waters to walking alongside elephants in Mana Pools with world-class guides, this is Africa's wild soul revealed.

Ready to plan your Zimbabwe safari?

Tell us when you'd like to travel, your ideal safari style and your approximate budget, and we'll recommend the best combination of Victoria Falls, Hwange, Mana Pools and beyond.

Have questions? Schedule a time to chat or email us at:

Africa Office - mari@cedarberg-travel.com or +27 27 482 2444

UK Office - info@cedarberg-travel.com or +44 20 8898 8533

Web - www.cedarberg-travel.com



Appendix: Victoria Falls Month by Month – Jan to May

Month	Falls Conditions (Flow & Spray)	Activity Highlights	Insider Notes
January	Rising water; heavier spray builds toward high-water season	Scenic helicopter flips; rainforest walk (expect mist)	Devil's Pool usually closes by mid-Jan as levels rise; rafting conditions vary and can be curtailed as water increases.
Feb - March	High and rising; very misty; thunderous roar; approaching max spray/energy	Full-moon lunar rainbow nights (But spray + clear skies needed) Heli flips for overview	Visibility can be limited; wear ponchos, protect cameras. Zambia & Zim sides both dramatic, but views often obscured. Best for "power" over photos. Rafting often suspended in high water.
April	Peak high water; heaviest spray of the year	Aerials + rainforest; dramatic sound & rainbows; start combining with Hwange	Expect soaked paths and limited visibility from some viewpoints. Photography is challenging from the ground.
May	High water easing; still big spray but improving clarity	Moonbow potential; great helicopter/doors-off photography; Can add Mana Pools safari	Transition month: still wow-factor flow with slightly better vistas than Apr.

Victoria Falls Month by Month Cont'd – June to Dec

Month	Falls Conditions (Flow & Spray	Activity Highlights	Insider Notes
June - July	Prime "see the Falls" months with classic views; lower spray, clearer vistas; cool and clear	Start of prime photography; calm weather; Helicopter flips, Microlight flights (Zambia)	Some of best all-round months for Vic Falls & Safari: comfort, views, wildlife Excellent visibility on both sides; rafting typically limited
August - Sept	Shifting to low water later in Aug; superb clarity Low water = gorge exposed; dramatic rock features	Devil's Pool usually opens mid-Aug; white-water Class V rafting ramps up to be in full swing in Sept; sunset cruises	Zambia side begins to dry late in Aug; Zimbabwe retains flow longer & is best for frontal view now. Great for photographers and adventurers. Hot afternoons by Sept
Oct - Nov	Very low water; hottest month	Peak white-water rafting; Devil's Pool opens; best ground-level visibility; great sunrise/sunset light on sunset cruises	Zambia side can be mostly dry; Zimbabwe still has Main Falls/Devil's Cataract flowing. Plan early/late visits for heat. Thunderstorms possible in Nov.
Dec	Low to moderate; early month still clear; Falls rising later	Devil's Pool commonly open until late Dec (but check); rafting strong (water levels permitting)	Zambia side improves if rains raise water levels. By late Dec water rise may start to limit some activities; check conditions close to travel dates.