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Botswana & Zambia Safari: Victoria Falls to the Okavango Delta

Travel Style - Guided Walking Tour

This small-group Guided Walking Adventure offers an authentic travel experience, one that takes you away from the crowds and deep into the fabric of local life. On it, you'll enjoy 24/7 expert guides, premium accommodations, delicious meals, effortless transportation, and local wine or beer with dinner. Rest assured that every trip detail has been anticipated so you're free to enjoy an adventure that exceeds your expectations.



Embark on a journey through Zambia and Botswana to experience the sights and sounds of the vast African wilderness. Listen to the thundering roar of Victoria Falls from a lookoff, surrounded by mist-soaked air. Marvel at expansive, green fields and pristine bushland overflowing with wildlife, taking in the grace of grazing elephants. Experience Africa's landscape up close as you track wildlife through the bush on foot during a walking safari in Botswana. Watch for submerged hippos as you travel calm waters by *mokoro* canoe. Relax and reflect on your time in Africa, sundowner in hand, before returning to your luxurious bush camp accommodations for a sumptuous meal. This is wild Africa – a landscape of untouched natural beauty waiting to be discovered.

What is a Walking Safari? Guided walks are a highlight of our safaris, getting you out of your safari vehicle and close to the incredible sights, sounds, and smells of Africa. Experience the thrill of strolling along the top of Victoria Falls in Zambia, track elephants with a renowned guide in Botswana and Zimbabwe, or observe giraffe on foot in South Africa.

You'll learn tracking techniques from our expert, naturalist guides and revel in the tiny details that present themselves when you're out in nature: flowers in bloom, birds on the wing, and newborn antelope foraging in the tall grass. Depending on the destination, these active explorations may be a major focus of the trip or serve as an occasional supplement to game drives and other vehicle- or boat-based adventures.

Tour Only Itinerary - 2019



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Day 1

Join your tour. Arrival in Zambia: Sunset boat cruise

Tour Meeting Point & Time: Sussi & Chuma Lodge, Victoria Falls, Zambia, 3:00 p.m.

A complimentary transfer from the Harry Mwanga Nkumbula International Airport to Sussi & Chuma Lodge will be provided for you regardless of your arrival time and date (and whether or not you have reserved the optional Flight + Tour Combo). Please be sure to inform Country Walkers of your flight arrival date and time at least 60 days prior to the tour start date so that we can confirm this transfer.

Upon arrival at the Harry Mwanga Nkumbula International Airport, receive a warm welcome and transfer approximately 30 minutes to your home for the next two nights, a serene sanctuary overlooking a scenic bend of the Zambezi River in Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park. Depending on your time of arrival, you may have time to refresh and relax before setting out on an evening cruise along the Zambezi. During your two-hour boat safari, you marvel at the landscape much as Scottish explorer David Livingstone may have when he first arrived in 1855, naming the nearby waterfalls for Queen Victoria. You are likely to spot pods of hippo, crocodiles, and an array of birds. Your cruise culminates with sundowner drinks and canapés as the African sun disappears behind the distant bush and sets the sky ablaze.

Return to the lodge, where a festive welcome dinner has been prepared. Your first meal in the bush might be quail kebab or curried chicken stew, perhaps finished with poached pears in red wine. Tonight and throughout your adventure, you may choose from preparations of local game and fish or from dishes that may be more familiar to you, with vegetarian options available. Later, retire to your luxury tree house, built into the canopy of majestic ebony trees. The calming sounds of the river and the wilderness lull you to sleep.

Accommodation: Sussi & Chuma Lodge, Victoria Falls

Named after Dr. David Livingstone's faithful friends Sussi and Chuma, this tranquil lodge is nestled among Jackalberry trees and Phoenix palms on a scenic stretch of the Zambezi in Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park. Recount your day over a cocktail or glass of wine at the elevated bar, or spotting birds while lounging in the shaded deck or even by taking a dip in the infinity pool. The twelve treehouses are linked by wooden walkways; each room offers air conditioning and a private deck. The lodge supports the education, conservation, and health clinic of the nearby village of Nakatindi.

Day 2

Victoria Falls: rainforest walk and village visit and game drive

2 hours of walking, easy. 1-2 hours optional walk, easy

After breakfast, join your guide on a walking tour on the Zambian side of Victoria Falls. When David Livingstone first set eyes on this spectacular natural wonder, he wrote, "Scenes so lovely must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight." Superlative descriptions don't end with Dr. Livingstone:



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Natives call it “the smoke that thunders” and they have been called one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. No matter what you call them, Victoria Falls takes the breath away: More than 19 million cubic feet of water per minute plummet over the edge of its massive gorge across a width of one-and-a-quarter miles and a depth of more than 330 feet. It is the largest known curtain of falling water on Earth, transforming the placid Zambezi River into a ferocious torrent that sends misty clouds of spray into the air visible from miles away. You walk through the surrounding wilderness this morning, peaceful and pristine even with the backdrop of the roaring falls. Trace footpaths along the table of a gorge-side cliff through the mopane woodland and rainforest. The vegetation you observe, including ebony, ivory palm and date palm is rare for this region, nurtured by spray from the falls. Throughout your walk, pause at inspiring viewpoints and keep your eyes open for one of the 35 species of fish-eating raptors. Fish eagles, peregrine falcons, and others perch in riverside trees waiting to dive for their catch.

End your walk with a relaxing and delicious bush picnic. Back at the lodge, you have several ways to fill your afternoon. First, pay a visit to Nakatindi Village, about three miles from the lodge. Here, some 3,000 residents live in simple mud and brick homes. One of Nakatindi’s community leaders shows you around. The village is special to Sussi & Chuma Lodge as its owners support the village’s education, conservation, health clinic, and enterprise. During your visit, stop by the clinic, grain mill, and school with its vegetable gardens, or join the village ladies for a soap-making demonstration. If you prefer, simply relax at the lodge, indulging in a spa treatment or a plunge in the pool.

Late afternoon, join your guide(s) for a 2-hour jeep safari in the game-rich Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Among its riverine forest, miombo woodland, and grassland, you might spot elephants, impala, giraffe, hippopotamus, zebra, vervet monkeys, and baboons. The elusive wild dog also passes through this park. This evening, share stories of your afternoon discoveries over another delicious meal.

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Day 3

Morning bushwalk and transfer to Chobe Chilwero Lodge: afternoon game drive

Set out with your guide(s) and park ranger on an early morning walk to discover the bush and ecosystem from a completely different perspective. You might see rhino, water buffalo, wildebeest, zebra, kudu, warthogs, baboons, monkeys, and other plains game along with tiny creatures too.



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Returning to the lodge for a hearty breakfast, you bid Zambia farewell and transfer by land to Chobe National Park, Botswana's first national park and home to the one of the highest concentrations of game in Africa, including hippopotamus, water buffalo, antelope, lions, and the continent's largest herd of elephants. The journey takes about 90 minutes, excluding customs and immigration formalities at the border.

Your destination is a luxurious lodge perched on the edge of the park above the Chobe River. The river is surrounded by lush floodplains, marshlands, and dense forests of mahogany and teak. It is common for elephants and other wildlife to gather here to drink and bathe. Spoonbills, ibis, stork, and other water birds may linger on the shore or in the canopy in search of fish.

The lodge offers unparalleled panoramic views across an island and floodplains as far as Namibia. After settling in to one of the property's 14 guest cottages, join your expert guide and driver for a thrilling late afternoon game drive into Chobe National Park. Though wildlife is among its most prolific here, as little as a century ago this land was inhabited by the San bushmen, who still believe that humans and animals are equal and that these untouched lands of Botswana bring energy to all who visit. On your drive, you may encounter Chobe's magnificent elephants. While large in body, you might notice their short tusks which, many believe, result from local soils that are low in calcium. Conclude your outing with sundowners in a scenic spot and return to the lodge for a gourmet dinner of regional cuisine, perhaps pork loin burgundy or grilled ostrich.

Accommodation: Chobe Chilwero Lodge, Chobe

Perched on a hillside, your lodge lives up to its name: Chilwero means "place of high view" in Setswana, the local language. With only 15 cottages, Chilwero has an intimate, village feel that blends seamlessly with its natural surroundings. During your stay, indulge in the services of the only full spa on the Botswana safari circuit, enjoy a soak in the split-level swimming pool, and savor exquisitely prepared gourmet meals. The lodge is proud to support the nearby Dipetsana Women's Bike Shop, a vital source of income and local transportation.

Day 4

Chobe National Park: sunrise boat excursion and afternoon game drive

Few experiences compare to game viewing on an African river cruise. As you slept to the distant symphony of beast and bird, a hush settled over the floodplain and all is still now. A stork at full wing glides over the tranquil current of the Chobe. Across the water, you glimpse a troop of baboons foraging in the shrub. An impala drinks from the river, its ears standing on end, attune to whatever predators might lurk.

No matter the morning scene, each new day holds the promise of eventful river cruises and game drives to come. (Bush walks are not permitted at Chobe National Park.) After a hearty and satisfying breakfast, you depart for a boat ride on the Chobe River, marveling as life unfolds along its vibrant banks. These waters flow here from Angola to form part of the border between Botswana and Namibia's Caprivi Strip before merging with the Zambezi River. It passes through six game reserves



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or wildlife management regions, supporting an enormous variety of wildlife.

After lunch back at the lodge – you may have the opportunity to make your own pizza or savor a three-course meal – relax during the hottest part of the day (the “siesta” to locals). Treat yourself to a spa treatment (at an additional cost) or relax on the terrace or in your cottage. Later, enjoy afternoon tea and scones before you embark on a game drive with your guide in an open-sided 4×4 vehicle designed for prime viewing. You traverse mopane forest and riverine woodland for water buffalo, hippopotamus, and other wildlife that gather on the Chobe’s verdant banks or watering holes. Common antelope such as impala, kudu, red lechwe, and puku (a small, rust-brown species) might also reveal themselves. Less common in Chobe are lions and leopards, though you might cross paths with these legendary big cats. Your guide is familiar with the habits and typical patterns of them all. And to many safari-goers, the majestic “grey giants” steal the show, often congregating at the river’s edge to drink.

As dusk settles, you witness a hushed quiet along the river’s bank where you may stop to enjoy a sundowner under a painted African sky. Back at your lodge, gather for a candlelit dinner served on the covered veranda, or a traditional barbecue set up on the manicured lawn.

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Day 5

Chobe Chilwero Lodge to Stanley’s Camp: Okavango Delta: afternoon game drive

2 hours of walking, easy

Time permitting, enjoy a final Chobe game drive this morning. Then transfer 10 minutes to the tiny Kasane Airport, where you board a small plane for an 80-minute flight into the remote heart of the Okavango Delta. From the airstrip, it’s a 15-minute drive to your award-winning, luxurious camp, set among ebony and sausage trees (or *moporoto*) on a 260,000-acre private reserve adjacent to the Moremi Game Reserve.

The Okavango Delta is one of Africa’s most breathtaking natural wonders. The inland delta forms the end of the Okavango River, but the desert climate of the Kalahari Desert evaporates the water for part of the year. As the river bursts its banks during the rainy season, the waters flow down from the Angolan highlands (May through July), creating a lush, water-drenched paradise of rivulets and reed-



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filled waterways that lure a huge diversity of wildlife. Changing water levels throughout the year mark distinct seasons and different wildlife viewing experiences none of which will disappoint.

Your intimate “camp with a conscience” combines classic elegance with sustainability, preserving the fragile environment. Recently refurbished, sturdy tents have a lighter footprint and a solar farm generates 80% of the electricity. What’s more, the camp’s connection to the local community is strong: Most of the staff live in nearby villages and some of the camp’s artisanal features were locally made.

After savoring a tasty lunch, set out on your first game drive with your experienced guide. This is the best way to get up close to the big game. As this is a private game reserve, your guide can detour off road to follow the tracks and tell-tale signs of recent (and elusive) passersby such as lions and leopards. Stop at a watering hole to savor a sundowner and observe (from a safe distance), pods of hippo, birds, and maybe elephants from afar.

Return to the lodge and refresh before reconvening at the main lodge. This evening, enjoy a multi-course dinner of venison lasagna or a gourmet lamb burger, paired with an excellent wine, and perhaps topped off by the chef’s famous coconut cake.

Accommodation: Sanctuary Stanley’s Camp, Okavango Delta

Stanley’s Camp, named for famed explorer Henry Stanley, shares this vast patch of the Okavango Delta with only one other camp, ensuring a more exclusive and uncrowded safari experience. Its ten luxury tents and main lodge, crafted with sustainability in mind, recently underwent a makeover (complete in April 2018). A solar farm generates 80% of electricity. Inspired by the traditional craftsmanship of Botswana—from the furniture and fittings to the woven basket lights—they exude a light and breezy atmosphere. Stanley’s Camp supports the Living with Elephants Foundation, which works to re-introduce orphans to the wild.

Day 6

Okavango Delta: morning bush walk and evening game drive

2 hours of walking, easy

This morning, you set out on foot for a two-hour adventure in the bush with your expert guide and armed professional camp guide. This a rare chance to to experience the Delta with all your senses, free of the whir of a vehicle engine, feet to the wild earth, and close to the scents and textures of the vegetation. During certain times of the year, the shifting of the Delta’s rivulets and lagoons make it difficult to plan a driving route and anticipate river crossings, hence there are fewer vehicle game drives in the area. This means you can continue to enjoy the privilege of exploring this lush environment by foot, relying on the fine-tuned tracking skills and knowledge of your guides. The birdlife in this “watered-down desert” is incomparable. You may also see larger game from a distance or come upon zebras standing belly-deep in water or giraffes and other plains animals marching across the floodplains. This is home to one of the largest water buffalo populations; a herd can



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number as many as 2,000.

You return to the lodge for lunch and a relaxing afternoon. If you wish, continue your game-viewing from the swimming pool, or your private deck, perhaps spotting a few of the rare wild dogs that roam the plains. Later, enjoy your customary sundowner cocktails as the African skies turn fiery shades of red and orange, then set off on an evening game drive by vehicle. This is a rare opportunity to see some of the Okavango's nocturnal species such as hyena, leopards, and bush babies, a small primate that makes its home in the trees. Your guide searches the hushed landscape with a special spotlight. After this thrilling adventure, return to the lodge for another delicious dinner.

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Day 7

Okavango Delta: morning mokoro excursion and afternoon bush walk

2 hours of walking, easy

Depending on the season, you may begin the day by taking in the Delta from a different perspective: Embark a *mokoro* (a dug-out canoe) for a safari by water. Your pilot navigates the craft by pole, standing on a platform aft and plying the waterways at a gentle pace. One of the most iconic symbols of the Delta, the *mokoro* was once the only form of transport when these plains filled with water. Locals used them to fish, to move goods, and to simply get around. You glide through a labyrinth of reeds and papyrus, drifting past lily pads and exotic flora. You might see eye-to-eye with a waterbuck as it drinks from the water, or float past a grazing elephant. Fish eagles survey the scene from waterside trees. Tiny frogs cling to palm fronds. And often the only sound you hear is the rhythmic trickle of your *mokoro*'s bow slicing through the water. It is a truly tranquil experience sure to stay with you long after you leave the Delta.

After lunch back at the camp, enjoy more time to relax and reflect on your journey and your findings. A final walk in the bush caps off your safari, one last opportunity to soak in the pristine beauty and splendor of the Okavango. This evening, you toast your adventures over a memorable farewell dinner.

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Day 8

Your *Botswana & Zambia Safari: Victoria Falls to the Okavango Delta* tour concludes

Rise early with the sun to soak up your last moments in this special place. Join your guides on a final bush walk or game drive and one more opportunity to witness the fantastic mix of wildlife in the Delta. After breakfast, you bid your hosts farewell and transfer to the airstrip to board a 15-minute flight to Maun for onward travels.