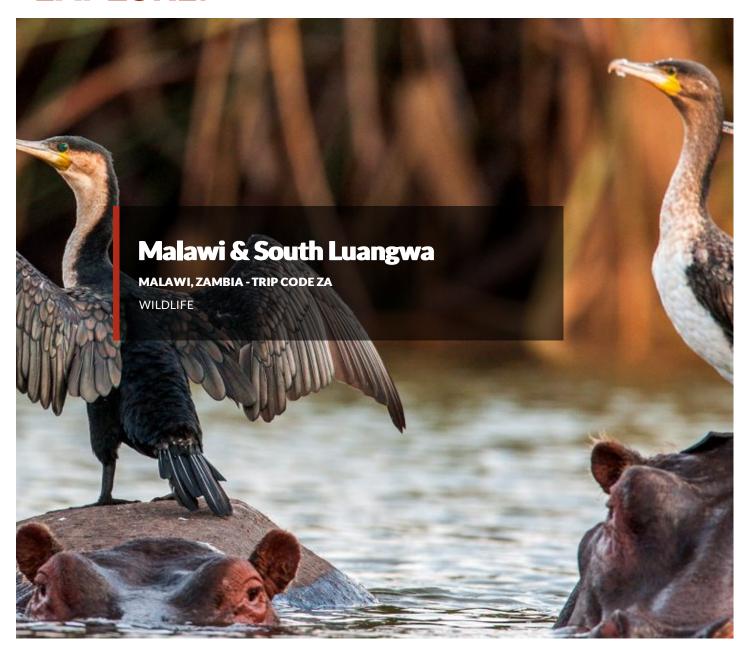
EXPLORE!



Why book this trip?

Experience the welcoming hospitality of Malawi; 'Warm Heart of Africa' before crossing into Zambia for two days of world-class game viewing in South Luangwa National Park.

- Lake Malawi Spend time on the banks of an African Great Lake and explore further on a boat safari
- South Luangwa Two days of action-packed game viewing and home to Africa's wild dogs
- Premium accommodation spend five nights in comfortable, exclusive safari lodges in wild settings























MEALS
Breakfast: 10
Lunch: 6

Dinner: 9

TRIP STAFF Explore Tour Leader / Driver Safari Guide(s) TRANSPORT 4WD Minibus ACCOMMODATION
6 nights
comfortable lodge
4 nights premium
lodge

TRIP PACE: Moderate

GROUP SIZE:

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Lilongwe; afternoon guided walk in Lilongwe Wildlife Centre

Arrive in Lilongwe, Malawi's bustling capital, where we check-in at our lodge.

Once a small village along the banks of the Lilongwe River, Lilongwe became a British colonial administrative centre and then the capital of Malawi in 1975. Today Lilongwe is divided into two distinct areas of the old town and new town with the Lilongwe Wildlife Centre in the middle. The old town is traditionally colourful with busy streets, while the urbanised new town contrasts greatly with tall, modern buildings set in manicured gardens.

This afternoon we'll visit the the Lilongwe Wildlife Centre with our leader through the 4km of forest trails and river paths. This sanctuary, the only one of it's kind in Malawi, is situated across a large stretch of land and offers a natural habitat for some 200 rescued animals, including monkeys, bush pigs and hyena, plus bountiful species of birds. As well as rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife, the aim of the centre is to educate the surrounding communities and young generations on the importance of conservation and protection against rife deforestation which troubles Malawi's future.

A welcome meeting will be held this evening before free time for dinner.



ACCOMMODATION:
Mafumu Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Lodge



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Take in the views from Zomba Plateau followed by an afternoon safari

This morning, we'll leave the capital and drive to Zomba Plateau via Dedza. This drive will take much of the morning through mountainous landscape.

The Dedza-Kirk Highlands is the name given to the mountain range that forms part of the Great Rift Valley mountains that separate Malawi from Mozambique. As we travel toward Zomba, there should be some opportunities to take photos of this stunning landscape. The southern part of Malawi is littered with inselbergs, or island mountains, which are small granite mountains shooting up from the planes like lone islands.

Later this morning, we'll arrive at Zomba Plateau. With views once described as 'the best in the British Empire', the mountain rises 1800m above the surrounding plains and forms part of the Shire Highlands. The elevation results in a very different eco-system from lower regions with a variety of flora, a number of small flowing streams, waterfalls and breathtaking views over Southern Malawi.

After a picnic lunch, we will leave and travel to our home for tonight on the banks of the Shire River inside Liwonde National Park. Arriving in the late afternoon, we will head straight out on a game drive. The river is the lifeline through the national park, attracting elephant, waterbuck, zebra and a large number of hippo that can be found wallowing in the shallows. The evening will be free to relax in the lodges comfortable surroundings.



ACCOMMODATION: Mvuu Camp (or similar)

Grade: Premium Lodge



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 3 - Boat safari along the Shire River with an opportunity to spot hippos, crocodiles and elephants

This morning we'll have an early breakfast and then explore the national park by boat along the Shire River, Malawi's largest waterway. The river is home to a dense population of half-submerged hippos and the waters also attract over 400 species of bird, elephants, Nile crocodiles and antelopes by the dozen.

We'll return to our lodge for lunch before travelling north, roughly following the river to Cape Maclear Nature Reserve where will be staying in a lodge on the banks of Lake Malawi. Although the drive will take most of the afternoon, the forest scenery and the view on arrival make it worthwhile! Cape Maclear is the name of both the reserve and the fishing village that lies within where the villagers are welcoming and curious. There are long stretches of golden beaches, ample opportunity to watch the daily lives of the local fisherman and and thanks to it's spot on the edge of an African Great Lake, it's a promising spot for an excellent sunset.

The evening will be free to relax and dinner is included this evening in the lodge's restaurant.





Grade: Comfortable Lodge



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 4 - A free day to enjoy the beach, visit the village or choose an optional activity on the lake

Today is free. Spend time soaking up the laid back atmosphere and unique environment of the lake complete with golden sandy beaches! Options include a leisurely visit to a nearby island, various water-based activities or just relax on shore.



ACCOMMODATION:
Cape Maclear Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Lodge



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 5 - Visit Mua Mission; overnight at Kumbali Wildlife Reserveve

After a leisurely start this morning, we head up the lake's coast where we stop off at Mua Mission. The mission is famous for the quality of wood carvings and was established in 1976 by a Canadian missionary Fr. Claude Boucher Chisale who dedicated his life to researching, recording and preserving Malawian culture. It is here that one gains a very deep and profound understanding and insight into the history of Malawi through the Chamare Museum, the Carving Centre and the new Research Centre.

After a picnic lunch, we will continue north along the shores of the lake to Senga Bay. On arrival we'll have time to check-in before going out for the sunset cruise on the lake. Accompanied by the captain on an open-sided boat, we'll travel out on to the lake in hope of seeing the territorial fish eagles and fisherman going about their daily routine before watching the sun go down over Africa's third largest lake.

We'll be spending one night here in a rustic eco-lodge where the beds are comfortable, the phone signal is lacking and nature is just on the other side of the lodge door.



ACCOMMODATION: Kumbali Lake Retreat (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Lodge



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 6 - Visit a working rice plantation; afternoon drive to Dzalayama Forest Reserve

It will be a leisurely start today with a relaxed breakfast before visiting a nearby rice plantation for a guided tour, offering a great insight into daily life in the prominent agriculture industry. We'll return to the lodge for lunch before departing on a long drive to Dzalanyama Forest Reserve. The drive will take around five hours through varied landscapes.

Late this afternoon, we'll arrive at the reserve which has been a protected area since 1922 and forms the natural border between Malawi and Mozambique. We'll have a late afternoon walking tour to orientate ourselves with the area, and hopefully see the indigenous orchids and birdlife.

We'll be staying at Dzalanyama Forest house for two nights where the accommodation overlooks the Makata Steam and is nestled among large Miombo trees. It's a great spot for those interested in birds and the different species can often be heard for miles in the early morning. Indigenous, colourful butterflies are common in the area too, normally seen down the river.



ACCOMMODATION:
Dzalanyama Forest Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Lodge



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 7 - Relaxing day visiting the local village and community project with traditional lunch

Today will be relaxed as our leader accompanies us on a visit to the local village to meet the locals and learn about their daily life. We'll be shown the traditional process used by the communities to distil local gin (Kachasu), make bread, and taste nsima with pumpkin leaves.

Our leader will also take us to visit the primary school, meet the community leaders and help us to develop an understanding of the challenges faced by small Malawian villages. We'll round it off with a local lunch within the community before a free afternoon to relax and make the most of the slower pace of life.



ACCOMMODATION:
Dzalanyama Forest Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Lodge



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 8 - Full day drive South Luangwa (Cross into Zambia)

This morning sees us up early for the drive to the the Zambian border where we shall cross into Zambia before continuing to South Luangwa National Park. We'll have a picnic lunch en-route and should arrive at our safari lodge in the late afternoon and the rest of the day will be free to relax, enjoy a sundowner or perhaps spend an evening around the campfire.

Our premium accommodation in South Luangwa provides a comfortable stay on the banks of the Luangwa River. We'll be staying in chalets with private bathrooms and verandas, based around a small swimming pool, all within the wild and natural setting of the African Bush.



ACCOMMODATION: Thornicroft Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Lodge



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 9 - Morning and afternoon safari experiences in South Luangwa National Park

South Luangwa is Zambia's premier park and is widely noted for its large concentrations of game and over 400 bird species! Nestled within the Great Rift Valley, the park covers a vast area over 9,000 sq. km and is bordered on its east side by the meandering Luangwa River. The park encompasses a wealth of habitats, including shaded mopane woodland, riverine forest, thickets, lagoons and grassland providing plenty of variety during morning or afternoon game drives.

The Luangwa River offers a permanent source of water resulting in ample opportunities of spot game. Hippos can be spotted in large numbers wallowing in the river, elephants come to bathe at the water's edge and Cape Buffalo are commonly seen. There is also the chance to see lions, wild dogs and leopards which are the main predators in the region. Binoculars will be key for any trip out, whether to get a better view of a leopard lazing on a tree branch or see the vast variety of birds up close.

Walking safaris are a very popular in this remote area too, and we hope to have the chance to explore on foot during our time here. Accompanied by an experienced park ranger or scout and a guide, walking safaris permit us the rare privilege of walking among wild animals in their natural environment, whilst also learning about smaller aspects of the bush. This is a fantastic opportunity to discover and learn about the plant life and animal spoor.

Today and tomorrow's exact itineraries will depend on local conditions and will require flexibility to make the most of our time here but rest-assured during the next two days in South Luangwa we include four half-day activities of either game drives or walking safaris.



ACCOMMODATION:
Thornicroft Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Lodge



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 10 - Morning and afternoon safari experiences

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

Free time between safaris can be enjoyed by the pool, on your veranda or having a relaxed drink in the welcoming bar.



ACCOMMODATION: Thornicroft Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Premium Lodge



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 11 - Trip ends

Your African adventure comes to an end today after breakfast.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Country information

Malawi

Climate

The main rainy season is from January to March. Rain is widespread and generally falls in the form of a thunderstorm in the late afternoon; grass tends to be long and there is more water about so game is more dispersed. Otherwise it is dry, with low humidity for most of the year. Temperatures reach around 29°C during the day with quite cold nights throughout the year. Early dry season is the most pleasant time for temperatures and the best for bird watching. For game viewing though the late dry season is better. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+2	3 Pin Flat	Protestant, Catholic, Islam	English, Chichewa

Zambia

Climate

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Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+2	3 Pin Flat	Christian & Indigenous	English, Bemba.

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Cape Maclear -

Snorkeling gear rental (mask, snorkel and fins) One day \$15 Kayak rental per kayak full day (before 12h00) \$30/ half day (after 12h00) \$15 Boat trips range between \$20-\$35pp depending on numbers

Please note that not all activities may be available.

Clothing

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

Footwear

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

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

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

Equipment

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

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly you should allow US\$50.00 per person for group tipping.

Malawi

Food and drink

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

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£10	£20	£1.5	£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Malawi Kwacha

Recommended Currency For Exchange

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

Where To Exchange ATM Availability

Your Tour leader will advise you. Available Lilongwe but they are unreliable.

Credit Card Acceptance

Very few places outside main cities will accept credit cards

Travellers Cheques

Unreliable, there is also at least 1% commission charged

Zambia

Food and drink

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

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
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£8 £20 £1.5 £1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Zambian Kwacha

Recommended Currency For Exchange

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

Where To Exchange ATM Availability

Your Tour leader will advise you. In the cities and larger towns, the larger banks have ATMs.

Credit Card Acceptance

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

Travellers Cheques

Can be difficult to exchange.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

4WD, Minibus

7ambia

Food and drink

Dietary requirements: Most restaurants and hotels in Zambia do not have a wide selection of vegan and vegetarian choices. There is usually a choice of salads and one main vegetarian and/or vegan main dish on the menus, but choice will be limited especially in more remote locations. If you have specific dietary requirements we do recommend for you to bring some food with you.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click here.

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click here

Under 18 immigration guidance

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

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. Booking Conditions

Visa and Passport Information

Malawi: Visas are required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian passport holders.

For UK passport holders, it is possible to apply for a single-entry visa in advance of travel for £65.00 from the Malawi High Commission. Please find more detailed information about how to do so here http://www.malawihighcommission.co.uk/index.php/visa.

It is also possible obtain visas on arrival for UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian passport holders, which are chargeable. Currently a single-entry visa on arrival is US\$75 per person on arrival.

All other nationalities, please consult your nearest Embassy for up to date advice on necessary visa requirements. Please be aware that visa information is subject to change, therefore please refer to your nearest Malawi embassy for up to date advice.

Zambia: Visas are required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian passport holders. All passports must have a minimum of 6 months validity from date of return to your home country and also have two consecutive blank pages in their passports which lie side by side when the passport is open (i.e. a left and a right hand page).

For UK passport holders, it is possible to apply for a single-entry visa in advance of travel for £35.00 from the Zambia High Commission. Please find more detailed information about how to do so here https://www.zambiahc.org.ukervices/visa-application-6/

It is also possible obtain visas on arrival for UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian passport holders, which are chargeable. Currently a single-entry visa on arrival is US\$50 per person on arrival.

All other nationalities, please consult your nearest Embassy for up to date advice on necessary visa requirements. Please be aware that visa information is subject to change, therefore please refer to your nearest Zambia embassy for up to date advice.

Travelling with Minors via South Africa (including transits)

Regulations affecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via South Africa are in place. The law states that parents and/or guardians are requested by the airline and/or South Africa immigration officers to provide additional documentation for each child they are travelling with. Please refer to the South African House website and your airline for full requirements.

When travelling via South Africa a machine readable passport is required. All nationalities should consult their local South African embassy or consular office for any visa requirements.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

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

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

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

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers. If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer click here

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full

terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

Flight Information

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

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport. On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Included activities

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

Ability to swim

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

Malawi

Vaccinations

We strongly recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, and polio. Malaria is present in the region so consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Yellow Fever: Please note you will need a Yellow Fever Certificate for border crossings between Zambia and Malawi. Bilharzia: The existence of bilharzia has been reported in certain areas of Lake Malawi. Please be aware that if you choose to swim there may be a risk of contracting bilharzia. However, certain medical advice indicates that it can be cured with tablets available through your Travel Clinic. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to

departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Zambia

Vaccinations

Yellow Fever is no longer compulsory for visits to Zambia, however please note that travellers that have previously travelled to or via countries that are endemic to Yellow Fever may be asked to present a Yellow Fever certificate at immigration/borders in Zambia. For a list of Yellow Fever affected countries please refer to: http://www.who.int/ith/2015-ith-annex1.pdf?ua=1 We strongly recommend protection against malaria, hepatitis A, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, and polio. Malaria is present in the region so consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Additional Information



Reviews









AIRPORT TRANSFERS