

Zambia – Kafue & Zambezi Detailed Itinerary

Zambia is a safari enthusiast's dream with over 30% of the country's land allocated to National Parks. With this itinerary you will explore two of the most unspoilt, stunning National Parks in Zambia with varied wildlife and up-close game. Kafue is one of the largest National Parks in Africa, despite its size and prominent location, it remains little known and largely unexplored and today it is still a raw and diverse slice of African wilderness with excellent game viewing and bird watching. The Lower Zambezi is very distinctive and quite different from other parks in the subcontinent, it is still relatively undeveloped, its beauty lying in its wilderness state. The diversity of animals is not as wide as the other big parks, but the opportunities to get close to game wandering in and out of the Zambezi channels are spectacular.

Our sample itineraries can be modified and adapted to suit your own interests, budget and time; please feel free to design your own itinerary and use this for ideas.

Trip Summary

10 days

Lodge accommodation

Best time to visit: June - September

Start LUSAKA > KAFUE NATIONAL PARK > LUFUPA > BUSUNGA PLAINS > end LOWER ZAMBEZI NATIONAL PARK

Trip Details

Day 1-2

Arrive Lusaka international airport, where you will be personally greeted by a member of the team. From the airport you will leave Lusaka in a 4x4 safari vehicle, heading out towards Kafue National Park, it is a comfortable 4-hour drive to the Lodge with cool drinks on board.

Settle into your lodge accommodation on the banks of the Kafue River, and enjoy a leisurely lunch and siesta before a late afternoon game drive or boat trip with sundowners. On your return to the lodge enjoy hot showers, drinks together in the bar and a 3-course dinner before retiring to your comfortable beds.



The first week of your safari is spent exploring the vast wildlife wilderness of the Kafue National Park including the remote Busanga Plains in Northern Kafue, a favourite haunt of Soren's. The first lodge you stay at is a

beautiful place nestled into the banks of the mighty Kafue River in a great game viewing location. Guided walks and boating are also options at Kafue as well as the regular game drives.



Kafue National Park was first established as a National Park in the 1950's by the legendary Norman Carr. Kafue is one of the largest National Parks in Africa. Despite its size and prominent location, it remains little known and largely unexplored and today it is still a raw and diverse slice of African wilderness with excellent game viewing and bird watching. The Park is dissected roughly north to south by the Kafue River, a major tributary of the Zambezi. The Kafue River and its tributaries help the great diversity of this landscape of rolling grass plains and forests. Much of the park is wooded but opens up at intervals to wide grassy clearings known as 'dambo's' where Antelope are attracted to the good grazing and the important grasses that Sable and Roan feed upon.

Kafue is regarded as one of the best places in Africa to view Leopard, seen frequently especially on night drives and it is not unusual to watch a leopard as it stalks a bushbuck or as it lays in wait for a passing Impala. Kafue is also well known for its Cheetah which can be seen in few other places in Zambia, also Wild Dogs appear to be on the increase, although rarely seen. The Kafue National Park is home to more species of Antelope recorded than any other park, including Red Lechwe, Liechtenstein's Hartebeest, Roan, Sable and Puku, Blue Wildebeest, Sitatunga, Deffassa Waterbuck, Reedbuck, Eland, Bushbuck, Reedbuck, Oribi, Grysbok, Steenbok and three species of Diminutive Duiker. Hippos and Crocodiles are seen along most of the waterways, and great sightings of elephant herds are made throughout the park. The Kafue elephants had a hard time from poachers in the 1980s and 1990s and although this problem is now under control, the breeding herds of females and young can sometimes still be nervous - the elephant never forgets.

In addition there is a plethora of unusual wildlife with Pangolin, Bushpig, Springhare, Land Monitor and Aardvark featuring. Also Mongoose, Genet and Civet Cats, Bush Babies, Baboon, Otters and Honey Badgers to name some of the 158 species of mammals recorded in the incredible wildlife area of the Kafue. More than 494 species of birds have been recorded in Kafue National Park, notable species include Pel's Fishing Owl, African Fin-Foot, Wattled Crane, Southern Crowned Crane, Fullbourn' Longclaw, Chaplin's Barbet (Zambia's only endemic bird), Black-cheeked Lovebird, Spoonbill, Bocage's Akalat, Scaly-throated Honeyguide, Black-breasted Snake Eagle, and Goliath Heron to name but a few.

Activities here include game drives, guided walks, boat trips and fishing.

Day 3-4



Staying within the Kafue National Park it is time to take a leisurely game drive to our next destination. The well-known Lufupa area of the Kafue is recognised as a focal point for prolific animal and bird life. Situated at the confluence of the Lufupa and Kafue Rivers, this site offers access to productive game viewing areas in the open grassy clearings and woodlands of the northern Kafue. Puku, Impala, and Defassa Waterbuck are common while more unusual species include Lichtenstein's Hartebeest. The area is renowned for its leopard and elephant; and lion sightings are regular.

The tranquil setting of the camp lies at the confluence of the Kafue River and the Lufupa Channel and overlooks these rivers. Possibly the ultimate in riverine settings, the camp unlocks an area of remote bush and languid waterways in the Kafue National Park. The area is filled with floodplains, broad-leafed woodland, lush riverine vegetation and dambos (open grassy clearings). Exploring the sparkling, smooth-flowing waterways provides lively wildlife and exceptional birding encounters, from Hippo to African Finfoot.

Day 5-7

This morning, set off and leave the Lufupa area for the Busanga Plains. The Busanga Plains is a wetland area in the extreme northern part of Kafue. The drive there is an adventure in itself, passing through very good game viewing areas with stunning views of the river as you wind your way northward through the park. The drive will take about five hours done at a leisurely pace, game viewing and bird watching along the way, and stopping for a picnic lunch.



Arrive at the small luxury tented camp for your stay. The camp has luxury safari tents on stilts with walkways and panoramic views of the plains. The camp's vehicles and camp drivers will be used on game drives, night drives are an option here, as well as hot air balloon rides. The balloon usually operates early in the morning for an hour's duration floating over the wildlife below.



The Busanga Floodplain is the wildlife and birdlife showpiece of Kafue, the jewel in the crown of the beautiful Kafue with an endless landscape of grassy plains and tree islands dotted with game, stretches in all directions as far as the eye can see. This is one of Zambia's most significant wetlands which can only be accessed by vehicle in July, August, September and October. The logistics of operating these camps in this area are huge. This vast wilderness is flooded in the wet season by several rivers, but during the dry season, large herds and a great diversity of wildlife move onto the plains to feed, from thousands of Red Lechwe to the Puku, the Sable, the Eland and rare

Roan Antelope, also huge herds of Buffalo & Wildebeest, and where there is an abundance of antelope there are sure to be predators – Lion, Cheetah and occasionally Wild Dog roam these plains. Lions are heard most nights, and Cheetah hunt their prey in the open area whilst Leopard roam the tree lines bordering the plains.

Conservationist Norman Carr described Busanga as 'one of the most beautiful bird sanctuaries in Africa', and its marshes do indeed host a wide variety of waterfowl, waders and other water-associated birds. Of Kafue's 494 bird species of note here at Busanga are Rosy-throated Longclaw and the rare Crowned Crane – flocks of up to 50 crowned cranes are regularly encountered, and several hundred Wattled Cranes are resident.

Here we would recommend two game drives – one in the early morning and one in the late afternoon and early evening. Brunch is usually at around 11.30 and then off out in the afternoon at around 3.30. During the day, rest up in the shade or a short walk along the tree line for birding.

Day 7-10

It is time to wave good bye to the Kafue National Park and hop on a scheduled flight to the far south of Zambia. Here you will land in the Lower Zambezi National Park then board a safari vehicle and drive just 10 minutes from the airstrip into camp. Accommodation is in classic stylish tents at the river camp. Over the next few days, enjoy some leisure time doing as little or as much as you feel like at the time. There is always plenty to do in the Lower Zambezi Valley, boating, canoeing, walking, fishing and game drives with beautiful landscapes and abundant game especially Elephant. If you are lucky you could witness elephant swimming the





Zambezi. The river is also home to some of the best tiger fishing in Africa, an excellent game fish with a mean reputation that is fun and rewarding.

The Lower Zambezi National Park extends along the northern bank of the Zambezi River in the south eastern corner of Zambia and is about 150kms downstream from Lake Kariba. The Lower Zambezi National Park is unspoilt with stunning scenery and varied wildlife. Here the riverine landscape and vegetation are very distinctive and quite different from other parks in the subcontinent. Perhaps it is the richness of the soils which allows the trees to grow so tall and strong, forming

woodlands with carpets of grasses, and only limited thickets of shrubs to obscure the viewing of game.

The acacia species include some superb specimens of winter thorn and the flat-topped umbrella thorn – both of these produce seedpods which the game loves. It all results in a beautiful, lush landscape that can support a lot of game, and is excellent for the ease of viewing which it allows. The river is the focal point for the abundant riverine flora and fauna. Across the river, the famous Mana Pools National Park of Zimbabwe and so the whole area both sides of the river is a massive wildlife sanctuary and a terrific amount of the bigger game notably elephant and buffalo actually cross the river regularly. The antelope in the valley are dominated by large herds of Impala, but good populations of Kudu, Eland, Waterbuck, Bushbuck, Zebra, Wildebeest and the odd Duiker or Grysbok also occur.

In the water, Crocodile and Hippo are always present, but look also for the large Water Monitor Lizard and the Cape Clawless Otter, which both occur but the latter is seldom seen. Lion and Leopard can be seen regularly, as well as unusual species such as the Honey Badger, Porcupine and Wild Dog are not common but are occasionally seen. There are over 400 species of bird recorded in the Lower Zambezi.



The Camp itself is set just outside the Lower Zambezi National Park, on the western bank of the Chongwe River, which acts as a boundary to the National Park. Its location on the smaller tributary just a few hundred yards from the confluence with the main Zambezi River adds to its attraction, adding a certain amount of intimacy to the camp to be able to see the other side of the Chongwe which is just 50meters across, as opposed to being on the main course of the Zambezi River which is very large and on occasions quite daunting.

The tents are spread along the bank of the river, and are light, airy and spacious. All of the tents are under thatch, ensuring maximum coolness in the heat of the day. Each has a large outdoor bathroom with hot and cold running water, shower, toilet, vanity unit and dressing area with a wardrobe and full length mirror. Outside the incredible views take over with their own private verandas overlooking the river, making them an ideal place for relaxation and watching the wildlife world pass by.

Game viewing can be done from a vehicle either in the Lower Zambezi National Park or the Chongwe Partnership Park or, if you prefer, from a boat on the Zambezi. Canoeing, walking and of course, fishing, are also offered. And for those interested in the rich cultural heritage of the area, community visits can be arranged.

Sadly all great things, must come to an end, and it's time to get a departing flight from the Lower Zambezi back to Lusaka for your onward journey.

We can arrange an extension on to your trip and take you to Victoria Falls and Livingstone if required.

To book this trip or for further information please contact a member of
our experienced team

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