

# Trekking Zimbabwe Safari

7th- 18th July 2018



**PNG Trekking Adventures**  
[www.pngtrekkingadventures.com](http://www.pngtrekkingadventures.com)



# Victoria Falls & Mana Pools National Parks

An aerial photograph of Victoria Falls, showing the wide sheet of water cascading over the edge of a plateau. The surrounding landscape is lush green, and a faint rainbow is visible in the mist rising from the falls.

## 10 Night Walking/Canoeing Safari

We invite you to join us on this most amazing raw out there trekking/canoeing Safari in Zimbabwe. PNG Trekking Adventures spent 18 months putting together this expedition concentrating on the dynamics and needs of their past and future clients.

We now have a very unique package which once again is away from the tourist routes, catering for the fit and healthy with the additional and most importantly, educating themselves about the African bush and the animals that live in it.

You cannot go all the way to Africa and not visit Victoria Falls. This is where your adventure starts. One of the greatest attractions in the world. The Falls and tourist town of Victoria Falls are situated in the western most part of Zimbabwe. The mighty Zambezi River is 1.7 km wide at the point where it plunges from a maximum height of 107 metres into the gorge below. This is the world's largest falling sheet of water. The walk through the rainforest (which can be very wet) provides some of the best views of the Falls, as well as some close encounters with wildlife such as mongoose, bushbuck, vervet monkeys and warthog.

After Victoria Falls we fly into Mana Pools to begin our trekking safari. Mana Pools has an incredible amount and diversity of wildlife. Particularly in the dry months of September and October when the animals move closer to the river. Four of the big five can be seen here: lion, leopard, elephant and buffalo; as well as hippo, waterbuck, impala, zebra, eland, kudu, and over 380 species of bird life. The birds found here include Lilian's lovebird, Livingstone's flycatchers, kingfishers, herons, bee eaters, fish eagles, hornbills (including the ground hornbill), and coucals.

After 4 days trekking we start out canoeing adventure, paddling leisurely down the mighty Zambezi River. This is anything but dull. The river is busy with elephants, crocodiles, hippo's, lions walking down the banks, just to name a few, and of course the magnificent bird life.

This is confronting, you are amongst the animals and looking at them at eye level. But once you have experienced this you will never go back to a driving safari. Families encouraged to book and give your children the opportunity to see animals that their grandchildren will not be privileged to see.



# Itinerary

**Day 1, Sat 7th July 2018:**

**Sunrock Guest House, Johannesburg.**

**Flight:** QF63 Syd- Joburg 10:50- 17:00

Sun rock Guesthouse is a family owner operated highly recommended guest house in Kempton Park situated in a quiet, peaceful area north-east of Johannesburg, which offers superior comfortable and service in a family environment. It is only 4km from O.R Tambo International Airport and 10 minutes from either the Festival Mall in Kempton Park or East Rand Mall in Boksburg. (B)

**Day 2 & 3, Sun 8th & Mon 9th July 2018:**

**Old Ursula Camp, Victoria Falls**

**Flight:** SA40H, JNG-VFA 1050-1235

(Client book)

Perfectly suited to small groups, Old Ursula is the ideal base from which to explore the many fascinating adventures of Victoria Falls. It is situated on a 6000 acre private reserve known as the 'Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve', just 10 minutes' drive from the Victoria Falls and Zambezi River. This reserve also borders on the Zambezi National Park, offering a distinctly different African experience.

To ensure a smooth transfer from the Victoria Falls Airport to Old Ursula Camp, guests will be met from your inward flight from Johannesburg, by a camp representative who will assist with airport formalities and a complimentary shuttle service to the camp in



a luxury, air-conditioned vehicle.

This intimate camp offers just four A-frame thatch chalets, each with views of the water hole and Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve. Since there are seven of us in the travelling party, we will have exclusivity of Old Ursula Camp. There is one main suite with lounge, two twin chalets and one double chalet. There is a communal lounge and dining area as well as a swimming pool. Shuttle services into Victoria Falls town are available on request.

Activities on the reserve include night and day game drives and the chance to search for Africa's Big Five, and an awesome interactive experience with elephants. Other activities include a rare chance to enjoy a Black Rhino Breeding Encounter, and a guided tour of Victoria Falls, one of the most compelling sites in the world.

'Below the Falls' activities comprise what is regarded by many as the world's greatest white water adventure, rafting down the mighty Zambezi River, enjoying the exhilaration and thrills of some of the biggest rapids in the world! Alternatively, there is also the option of river boarding or jumping on-board a high speed jet boat and experiencing the unique features of this river.

'Above the Falls' activities include cruising peacefully on the River Safari boat, exploring the islands and channels, with a personalised guided safari on the upper Zambezi River. There is also the up close and personal canoe safari or, for the romantic at heart, the Sun-downer cruise on the Mighty Zambezi. The 'Over the Falls' concept includes the legendary helicopter "Flight of An-

gels" for spectacular views of the Victoria Falls. If this doesn't quite set your pulse racing, then guests can take off on the flight of a lifetime in the open cockpit ultralights for unparalleled viewing.

The 'In Front of the Falls' concept is pure adrenaline and includes the Victoria Falls Bungi Jump, which will test the boundaries of your adrenalin as you plummet 111 metres towards the Zambezi River. (B,L,D)

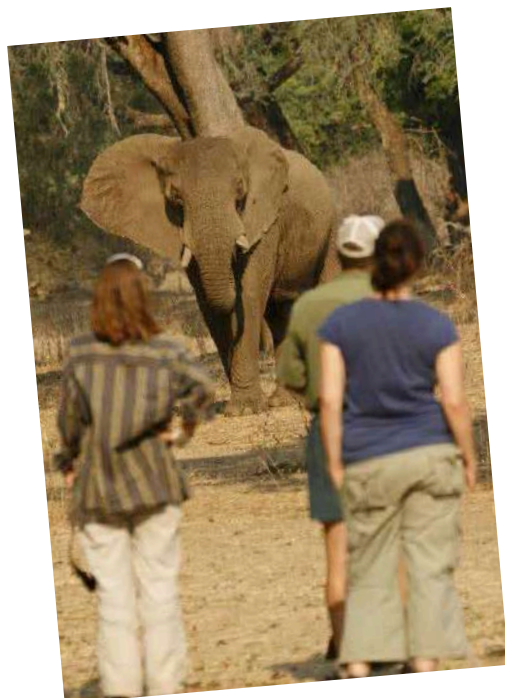
Entry into the falls is USD\$30.00 per person. A map of the falls is USD\$5

**Day 4 & 5, Tue 10th & Wed 11th July 2018:**

**Chitake Bush Camp, Mana Pools NP**

Upon arrival at Mana Main Airstrip before lunch, you'll be met by your guide from Chitake Bush Camp and driven through the park to the Camp, situated at the renowned Chitake spring near the foothills of the Zambezi Escarpment. This is a mobile-tented camp that will be your first night base for your two days of trekking from Chitake to the mighty Zambezi River.

Chitake Bush Camp is unique - few places in Africa can match the excitement, the adrenalin rush or the times of peaceful tranquillity that can be experienced during a stay in this pristine area of the park. The Chitake River rises in the Zambezi escarpment and weaves its way through these majestic hills down to the flat valley below, flowing into the Ruckomeche River and then finally into the Zambezi itself. The river is seasonal, flowing spo-





radically during the rainy season from December to March. During the dry months, the river consists of long lengths of sand with intermittent water holes and, as the dry season progresses, the pools dry up and the wildlife concentrates on the few remaining water sources that give life to this area. Chitake spring seeps up through the sand of the Chitake River and runs for 1.3km, depending on the season, then disappears again into the sand.

Your tents are comfortable and walk-in 3x3m dome tents with stretcher beds & bedding. A shower and toilet is set up for guests to share and all your meals are prepared in camp. Your guide will assist in preparing backpacks with the team, discussing the route for the next 3 days and giving a safety talk.

Setting off early in the mornings after breakfast, your guide will lead you on ancient elephant trails and other game paths covering approximately 10 kilometres per day. The walking is generally flat and you will hike through a variety of flora including Mopane woodland, and thicker forest scrub where you have a chance to see the near endemic crest guinea Fowl.

Along the way your guide will do his best to take you in close to a number of secret, off the beaten water holes that are frequented by elephant, buffalo, lion, leopard, hyena, Wild Dog and other plains game like eland, nyala, kudu, zebra, impala, bushbuck, warthog and baboon. The Ruckomeche River also courses its way in the same direction as your trek towards the Zambezi River and your guide will meander close to the river which in the dry season of Au-



gust may still have pools frequented by elephant that fascinatingly excavate deep down to find precious water beneath the sands.

The riverine vegetation consists of stunning hardwood trees like African Ebony, Leadwood, Nyala berry and Wild mango and the bird life consists of an excellent diversity of over 350 species in the national park.

Lunch times are casual packed lunch affairs in a shady spot overlooking a pan or smaller river. Typically the walks are aimed to enjoy the high density of flora and fauna and of course the thrill is that of walking in "Big Game" country where your armed guide is expert at guiding you along at a gentle controlled pace in harmony with your environment.

After each day's walk, you'll meet up with Chitake camp and staff, enjoy a comfortable bed and delicious dinner prepared by the staff and enjoy a hot shower under the stars. Relaxing around the campfire after a good day's trek is a superb end to each day!

#### **Day 6, Thu 12th July 2018: Chitake to Chavava Camp Site**

An early, early breakfast today. It is the groups first long walk, this can be anywhere between 17-26kms. Depending on how many animals we have to divert around. Expect to see lions, maybe a leopard, many elephants and a smorgasbord of birds. During the heat of the day we will stop for lunch and a siesta under the trees. Start walking again around 3pm. We will not make camp until late afternoon. This camp is adjacent a dry sand river bed. Extremely isolated and very different to

Chitake. BUT the African sky in all its beauty abounds here. We will lie on our backs tonight star gazing as our guide outlines all the constellations and tells stories of African nights.

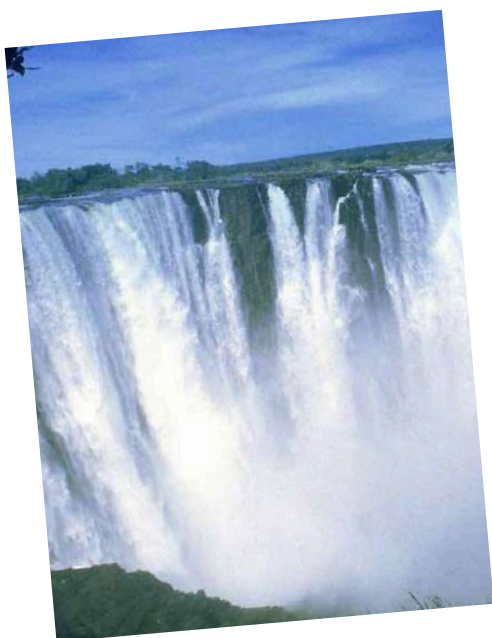
#### **Day 7, Fri 13th July 2018: Chavava Camp to Vundu Camp**

A combination of walking and road transport will take us closer to the mighty Zambezi today. Walking approximately 16kms today to Vundu Camp. Passing "Long Pool" part of Mana Pools NP. The pools are abundant with wildlife, young bull elephants, will encounter hippo's and crocodiles for the first time. Again the bird life is magnificent. Our camp is beside the Zambezi, an amazing spot. Do not venture into the water.

Mana Pools National Park is a World Heritage Site and encompasses an area of a quarter million hectares in the north of Zimbabwe. The Park is famous for its flood plains with its unique Acacia Albida forests that set the stage for the everyday interactions between its many varied inhabitants: Lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard, Painted Hunting Dogs, hyena, hippo, crocodile, zebra, kudu, waterbuck and eland are just some of them.

The birdlife as you'd expect on Africa's fourth largest river is excellent, especially the myriad of larger raptors like African Fish eagle, Bateleur eagle, Pel's Fishing owl, Giant Eagle Owl, Brown Snake eagle, Marabou Stork, 4 species of vulture, and Martial eagle.

Your river camp like Chitake Bush Camp is a mobile tented camp and your spacious walk-in tents are totally mosquito-gauzed and sealed. They have comfortable stretcher beds, side table & LED light.



**Day 8, Sat 14th July 2018:****Vundu Camp Paddling**

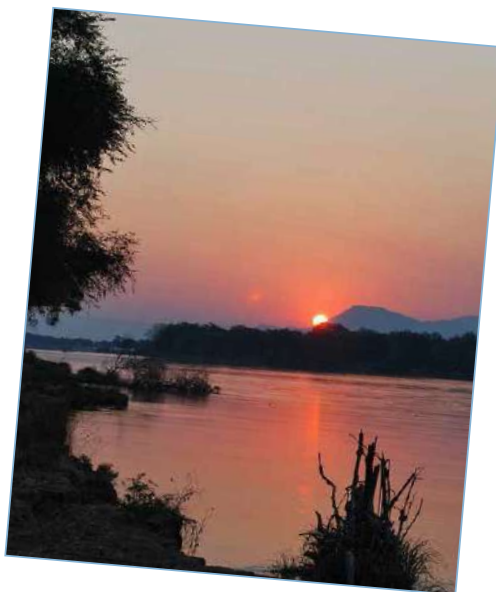
On day 7 an early wake-up as dawn breaks. Hot water for freshening up will be placed in raised basins outside each tent, while tea, freshly brewed coffee, muffins or home-made biscuits are already waiting by the campfire. While you pack up your personal kit, the support staff load the canoes with all required for the day ahead. Guests need only worry about a small day-pack carrying essentials such as sun block, camera, hat and binoculars. We drive to our canoe launch spot.

**Paddling-**Our guides briefing covers the basic techniques of steering and controlling the Canadian-style 5.5m(18 ft) canoes. The group then departs downstream. Today's paddling is taken at a slow pace, allowing you time to become acquainted with the canoes and methods of steering. You should now begin to see some of the multitude of animals and birds attracted to the water's edge. Hippo, buffalo, elephant and crocodile, as well as a variety of antelope species, may be seen.

Arrival at camp is around sunset. The camp will be fully prepared and you will be able to sit back and relax with sun downers and snacks – tea and coffee and hot showers are also available. A campfire is already burning and this is invariably where guests will gather to discuss the day's events and plan for the morning. In the background your support staff and resident bush cook are busy preparing a three-course dinner for you.

**Day 9, Sun 15th July 2018:****Vundu to Chessa Camp Paddling**

The aim is to be in the canoes and on the water in time to watch the sunrise. As is one of the most magical times of day, you will be enchanted as you drift along quietly, listening to the sounds of the African wild waking to a new



day.

Following paddling for a couple of hours, breakfast takes place under a grove of acacia trees. After breakfast, guests have the opportunity to set off on a walk on the flood plain and surrounding woodlands. This is a great time to try and view predators before they hide-up for the day. You may even be lucky enough to spot one or more of the diurnal animals making their way down to the river. This walk offers an opportunity, not only for game viewing, but also to explore some of the more interesting aspects of the environment.

Guests will spot a variety of animal spoor, and may even find themselves engrossed in tracking down a particular species. Your guide will share fascinating facts about strange insects and spiders as well as a wealth of knowledge about this miniature world that forms such an integral part of the bush. Sounds of many brightly coloured birds can be heard while marvelling at the beauty and tranquillity of this unique area.

Returning to the canoes guests head down stream to an area renowned for its huge, old elephant bulls. The guide tries to time the trip to catch them swimming or wading out to the grass islands, where the canoes will be able to glide quietly alongside these awesome giants. Their age makes them placid enough that they tend to ignore the canoes.

Lunch break coincides with the heat of the day. The canoes are pulled up below a grove of mahogany trees whose

dense shade provides a welcome relief. The meal generally consists of cold meats, freshly prepared salads, pizza or quiche and cheese and biscuits. After eating and drinking their ice-cold drinks, guests have a choice to either take another short walk through the mahogany forest or to just relax and enjoy an afternoon siesta.

The late afternoon and evening is spent drifting down to camp and enjoying the game and birding along the river's edge. Our welcoming support staffs are waiting at camp which is reached by sunset.

**Day 10, Mon 16th July 2018:****Chessa Camp to Ilala Camp Paddling**

Prior to breakfast today the group will take a 2 hour stroll around the camp site. Tracking and sighting lion, antelope, birds, monkeys, baboons. It is again a smorgasbord of animals. Back to camp for breakfast, followed by another days paddling. Today is spent paddling through a maze of small channels before once again joining the main Zambezi. For a change, lunch is on one of the shallow sandbanks in the middle of the river, where a table and chairs are set up in ankle deep water with the whole width of the river stretching out on either side. Depending on water levels and time allowed, there may be an opportunity to explore Chikwenya Island on foot. This unique island is the largest on this section of the river and is host to prolific bird life as well as a number of interesting mammal species. In the afternoon you will paddle into Ilala Camp. Many animals, water buck, impala, el-





ephants, hippo's everywhere and very large crocodiles. Again the bird life is prolific. This is a magnificent day on the river. You were learn how to throw a "leg over" today.

**Day 11, Tue 17th July 2018:**

### **Ilala Walking**

The night will have been noisy; hip-po's making their way inland to feed. Guests will find lion and hyena foot prints around the tents this morning. Wandering around the camp during the night is definitely not recommended. Hence the private individual toilet en suite attached to individual tents.

An early start, tracking animals all morning. Followed by lunch and a siesta back at camp, heading back out walking late afternoon. It is a magical evening back at camp, sitting around the camp fire drinking long tall gin and tonics watching the African Sun set over the mighty Zambezi.

**Day 12, Wed 18th July 2018:**

### **Depart**

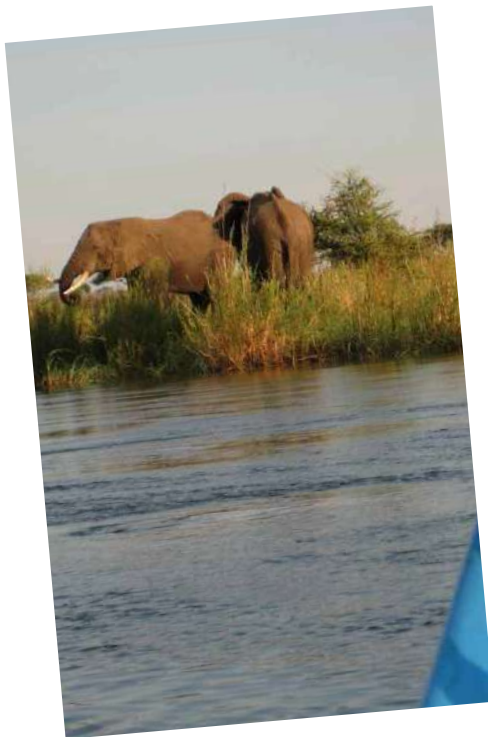
After the choice of an early morning activity and breakfast, the group will be driven back to Mana main Airstrip where your air charter returns you late morning to Harare International Airport, and your flight home. **OR**

**Flight:** SA23 Harare- Joburg 13:00- 14:40

QF 64 Joburg- Syd 19:10- 14:55

(Cient book)

Optional extra 4 day Botswana Safari – Please contact Pam for more information on this expedition.



### **The Seasons of Mana Pools**

Mana Pools is seasonal, with the first rains (Dec to Mar) the barren earth bursts into life with grasses and seeds that have lain dormant over the dry season. It is at this time that the impala drop their calves in unison with one of nature's incredible ironies to overwhelm the ever present predators. Larger game like Elephants and buffalo will generally move away from the flood plains, but some of the older resident bulls of both species tend to stay in their uninterrupted world.

In winter (May to Jul) the pans start to dry up and the cow herds of elephant and buffalo start to return to the river. The flood plain becomes a mass of highways of integrated game trails as the animals compete for their share of the food.

As the season gets drier (Aug to Nov) the predators come into their own due to the abundant numbers of prey congregating on the flood plain in search of water and the pods of the Acacia al-bida. By mid November the rain clouds are building every day and finally the heavens open to a scorched earth and so the cycle of life begins again.

## **Tour Inclusions**

- B & B Accommodation and transfers Johannesburg (*Twin Share*)
- Old Ursula Camp – Rhino Search Safari. 3 scheduled transfers to VF town.
- All accommodation & (BLD) at Old Ursula Camp, all meals at Mana Pools mobile camps.
- All activities, drinks, services of a professional guide in Mana Pools NP.
- \*Mana Pools Conservation park Fee US\$160 per person.
- Return road Transfers to and from Old Ursula Camp to VF Airport,
- Private air charter from VF to Mana Pools and return flight Mana Pools to Harare.
- This itinerary begins at Victoria Falls Airport and ends at Harare Airport.
- Airport transfers

## **Tour Exclusions**

- Drinks & other activities at Old Ursula Camp – an activity per day inc at OUC – suggest one day rhino search – the other day perhaps a game drive.
- Drinks & any meals & activities in Victoria Falls town
- Items of a personal nature, tips & gratuities
- VF Rainforest entry fees (US\$35 per person)
- Visa fees & departure taxes where applicable
- Single Accommodation POA
- \*Subject to change

### **International Airfares**

We have prepared a flight schedule that we can assist you with. We recommend co-ordinating all internal/ international flights with our recommended travel agent.



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