



The
Africa Adventure
Company

Southern Africa

Flying Safari to Chobe in Botswana

Flying Safari to Victoria Falls and Hwange in Zimbabwe

Visit to Cape Town

Hello Elena,

We are back from our trip. It exceeded all of our expectations. It really was an amazing experience. We saw many animals and got great pictures. The whole time we felt very taken care of. The Davison's Camp was our favorite. The food was excellent, the accommodations were great. We had an excellent guide by the name of Dixon who really taught us a lot about the animal life. My boys idolized him.

All of the transfers went without a hitch. At no point did we ever feel left on our own to navigate the system. There was someone at every transfer point.

The animal life at the Chobe camp was a much higher volume which was nice. Our guide there went out of his way to get us some views of leopards. The accommodations were very nice, but I would have to say that the Davison's Camp's hospitality and food was a bit better if I had to compare the two. That said, I wouldn't have wanted to miss the sheer number of animals at the Chobe Park.

Victoria Fall Hotel was opulent. It felt like we had stepped back in time. The food there was very good. Ester was a wealth of knowledge, and the experience at the village was excellent. I thought it might be commercial but it definitely was not that at all. We also stopped at an orphanage in the township on our way back. Those experiences were very good for the kids. We had a lot of fun on the elephants. The kids were sad we didn't have enough time to do the zipwire (I'm not so sad).

We hit the ground running in Cape Town. Buz was another amazing person. We learned a tremendous amount and he tailored the time to the family's interests. I can't believe we covered so much ground!...

One piece of feedback I'd like to give is this: I didn't realize how involved Wilderness Safari is in giving back to the communities. It felt very good to be a part of this, and it would be nice to understand that a little more before going. Realizing this just made me even happier to have worked through your agency.

Thanks for making that amazing experience come together.

Wendy Barros, July 2011



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Safari to Mashatu Private Game Reserve
Visit to Coach House-Tzaneen in the Drakensberg Mountains
Safari to MalaMala Private Game Reserve

Kyle,

We had a fabulous time!!!

I have so many great things to say about the trip and I know you are well aware of the quality of Mashatu and MalaMala.

As you might expect, they are very different and from our perspective, each had its own unique benefits. For Mashatu we loved the isolation and authenticity of the guides and staff. I loved how our ranger tracked using foot prints and other signs. A special treat was when the big cat researcher was with us tracking a lion using a radio signal and antenna. One of the old rangers found the lion (the old fashioned way) just before the technology did! The girls and I did a village excursion and I would highly recommend that you encourage your clients to do it. We learned a lot, loved the warmth of everyone we met in the village and felt like princesses the whole afternoon.

At MalaMala, the unique benefits included the quality of the food, the rooms and the wit and energy of our ranger, Kurt Bertels. With up to 15 vehicles driving around the reserve, we were able to see a lot of cats and they did their best to limit the number of vehicles in one spot.

In the end, 3 of us had a preference for Mashatu but one of my daughters preferred MalaMala. The combination was perfect, though...

Thank you for all,
Ellen Lasch, Aug 2011

Visit to Livingstone
Safari in Zambia to Lower Zambezi National Park (Old Mondoro + Chiawa)
Visit to Cape Town

Hi Elena,

The trip was wonderful and I can't wait for an excuse to do it again.

The Royal Livingstone was an oasis of peace. We were treated to marvelous food, great scenery and animals, and a warm staff. Within 15 minutes of our arrival they had Chris out on the water to try his luck. I just lounged around the pool. The ultralight was an adrenalin rush and the elephant ride hilarious. Our bull wouldn't follow directions and "Bob" the dominant bull had to keep coming back and rounding us up. Then our bull would start running and Chris would be yelling something about bull riding in the Texas rodeo and the manager would be laughing and so forth. Great fun.

Old Mondoro was everything a bush camp should be. Reed enclosed tents, lanterns at night, a resident frog who liked my laundry hanging on the clothes line in the bath, hippo grunts at night, campfires, elephants outside our door, bush lunches, etc. Our only regret was we weren't there longer. The manager Jason took Chris and me out Tiger fishing and we both caught great fish on the fly. Unfortunately I also got way too much sun and was under the weather for a couple of days.

After the delightful water transfer to Chiawa, Sacha, Tam and Bren took one look at me and put me on salts and electrolytes. They had me back in good form in no time, but I never was able to take the afternoon game drive because of the sun. So they either arranged for me to go under shade for a boat cruise or kept me company while we watched all the game that wandered through the camp and had our sun-downer by the river. Then as evening approached and Chris returned from fishing, they would meet him with a sun-downer and made sure we had a driver for the night drive. The lion, leopard and elephant sightings were magnificent. We spent part of an evening watching two leopards cubs harass their mother, a morning invading the privacy of mating lions, and lunch shared with the resident camp bull. One time we were trumpeted and false charged by a bull--and I was in the back seat alone and my vision still brings up two massive ears and a trunk. The aardvark was fascinating and the baby elephants adorable. At one point there were eight of us in camp from Africa Adventure Company.

The fishing was fantastic. Chris fished 12 hours a day and caught magnificent Tiger fish, reputedly the finest freshwater fighting fish in the world. He was just one big grin. I went with him twice for a few hours and caught fish also. The guides were very knowledgeable and we had brought all the right fly rods and bait casters. He also caught one ugly 50 pound Vundu catfish.

Cape Town has such suburb food. We especially enjoyed Baia's seafood. Andrew, our private driver, was the best and he made both excursions special. Unfortunately we scheduled the Stellenbosch wine tasting for a Sunday and almost all the wineries were closed. Andrew took us to some of the smaller wineries, which was probably a good thing as the wines were great, and the company picked up the tab for lunch at La Petite Ferme, a great county French Inn. We enjoyed the penguins and the fur seals and the Cape of Good Hope. When it came time for the cheetah encounter Spier said we couldn't see the cubs because they weren't old enough. Andrew made a phone call and the next thing we knew we were back on the road to a different location and ushered into an enclosure with all four cubs. It sure paid off on more than one occasion having the private driver...

Overall, however, I'd do it again in a heart beat.

Thank you Elena for a great trip.

As ever,

Barbara Lyndrup, Sep 2011

Private flying safari to Hwange/Mana Pools/Motobo Hills

Dear Alison,

Congratulations on your 25th anniversary --- Karen and I wish we had started our Africa safari-ing with you back in 1986.

Nic Polenakis was once again the highlight of our safari, just like our previous trips with him. His contagious enthusiasm and sincere kindness and empathy, coupled with an apparently infinite reservoir of wildlife knowledge makes time with him such a pleasure. We're already thinking about our next trip.

Somalisa was our favorite camp with its combination of great game viewing, authentic bush camp atmosphere and excellent food and staff. We loved the front porch waterhole and one day watched an elephant family dote on an hour-old ele baby. A partial list of our game sightings would include giraffe,

kudu, waterbuck, sable, roan, elephant and buffalo. Some of the action highlights were when watching a nervous cheetah family on a waterbuck kill a big male lion appeared, ran off the cheetahs, and stole the kill. Another was the remarkable "Out of Africa" scene at a waterhole one evening when a huge herd of buffalo, maybe one thousand, enveloped the waterhole and mingled with elephants and other game. Just like the movies! One evening after dinner a roaring male lion came right into camp to be illuminated by lights, and on several other nights elephants walked between tents. And finally at Somalisa Nic got us onto a rhino track and we were able to walk up to a family group of three white rhinos, and that was a thrill. One in our party saw wild dog which we missed. We just needed more time to appreciate everything Somalisa had to offer.

Our mobile camp in northern Hwange near Shumba was delightful --- more excellent meals and service. Very comfortable beds and tents and en suite facilities. Although the lions eluded us we enjoyed seeing literally hundreds of elephants, plus a big herd of buffalo coming to water, along with roan, kudu, hippo, honey badger, and some nice birds like golden breasted bunting and blue waxbill.

At Vundu Camp in Mana Pools our dreams came true one morning when we got in the midst of seventeen wild dogs on the hunt. It was so exciting seeing them run and split up into pairs and singles and then regroup and go again. Nic kept us in the hunt until they killed and ate an impala. Wild dogs are our favorite so this was a special sighting.

Nic was able to locate Handstand (the elephant and several times we were able to video the big tusker stand on his hind legs while reaching high into a tree with his trunk for a green branch). Amazing! The lions did not elude Nic here and we observed several groups including youngsters. Two solitary female lions had a dispute with hyenas one morning and both lion and hyena looked the worse for wear, with multiple wounds and mangled ears. One elephant bull we walked close to gave us the trumpet and mock charge treatment, kicking dirt on us as he skidded to a stop, which is what my heart did momentarily.

There was lots of other game at Vundu including impala, waterbuck, warthog, hippo, crocodile, banded and dwarf mongoose, kudu and numerous eland and birds. Camp beneath the shade trees on the bank of the Zambezi was very comfortable with hot water for showers constantly available. The food and service was excellent.

Nic delivered us to Camp Amalinda and turned us over to the care of guide Paul Hubbard. For our few days in Amalinda we elected to just relax and enjoy the scenery, company, and food. This proved to be a good choice as Paul was a virtual encyclopedia of all things Matabo and especially cave paintings. Paul made our stay there so fulfilling and enjoyable - - - not to forget our visit to the Children's Home which we would not miss and hope to return.

All the travel arrangements, connections and transfers went perfectly. The small plane flights were reassuringly professional and delightful.

A genuine Thank You!! from both of us,
Sincerely,

Fred & Karen Peters, July 2011

Flying safari to Ongava-Etosha/Kunene/Skeleton Coast
Flying safari to Okavango Delta-Moremi and Linyanti
Flying safari to Lower Zambezi National Park and visit to Livingstone, Zambia

Dear Mark and Szilvia,

We have returned from another amazing safari experience. Thanks so much to everyone at Africa Adventure who organized every detail for us.

Mark, thanks for setting up such a great itinerary. It was absolutely fabulous. A very special Thanks for arranging to have Brooks as our guide at Mombo and Zarafa. He was excellent. He was so knowledgeable about the animals, their habitats, the wonderful working of nature...he would stop the vehicle and just listen and then he could tell us what messages the animals were sending. We found a leopard with a kill because of that listening. But he also had such knowledge of Botswana. He gave us a talk while we are on a sunset cruise at Zarafa. I told him he should be a teacher. He also was very attentive to any need we had at the camps. Excellent!!!!

Wilderness Safaris was great. When we discovered that we could not store Dave`s extra bag at the Joburg airport, they arranged to have it stored at Windhoek and again at Maun and we retrieved it at Kasane. That is one point that travelers need to know if they are transiting through Joburg and wish to store extra luggage. The luggage storage area is located OUTSIDE the arrivals area and can only be accessed if you exit the arrivals area. That necessitates you going back through clearing security and Immigration. We were told we did not have enough time as you need at minimum 3 hrs.

Little Ongava Camp was amazing. It would have been nice to have 3 nights there as it would give one time to really enjoy the camp itself...

Serra Cafema and Skeleton Coast Camp also wonderful. Jonathon and Kallie were our guides respectively and both had just an encyclopedic knowledge.

Our return from Skeleton Coast to Windhoek was a little long in that we flew to Palmwag, Ongava, Windhoek International and then Eros. It was almost 6 hrs travel time. But we understand it is difficult to arrange transport with so many itineraries to accommodate.

Mombo was amazing. I celebrated my birthday there and they provided a beautiful private dinner for Dave and myself. Never to be forgotten!

Zarafa , also excellent. It was nice to be in a smaller camp following Mombo which seemed to have so much staff, that there were always people around. Alex is a great Manager at Zarafa.

Toka Leya was also lovely. The staff were great. We had met a young woman who worked in the shop at Victoria Falls hotel while we were on our last safari. We have kept in touch with her since then ... She arranged a border pass and met us at the camp. The staff were amazing to her as we were delayed arriving and they gave her lunch and made her feel welcome. Dave inquired if it would be at all possible for us to go with her back to Zim to see her home..They arranged it all with Wilderness. She was so happy. We were able to visit with her in her home and she was so very very proud to show it to us. We in North America take so much for granted!

And then on to Chiawa. We absolutely loved Chiawa. It was the perfect camp at which to end our safari. We admit we were a little overdosed on game drives and to have the option of the river cruises was just the best. Sascha and Tam were wonderful

We did 2 night drives with Sascha and he gave us 2 lessons on the stars in the southern sky...fabulous!

So a perfect trip. All our transfers were problem free. So once more, Thanks to all. We were asked a couple times who arranged our travel and we passed on the business cards so maybe you will hear from them.

We wish you the very best,

Margaret and Dave Thomas, Sep 2011

Flying Safari to Victoria Falls/Hwange/Mana Pools Visit to Cape Town

Mark and Szilvia,

The trip that you organized for us was far beyond our expectations. It was such a fabulous experience. My husband, who wasn't all that keen on traveling to Zimbabwe, said it was one of the best trips of his life. And we have been on some pretty great trips.

Everything went so smoothly. People and planes arrived when and where they were scheduled. Not a single ball was dropped, which, given the amount of moving around we did, is really saying something!

We enjoyed every place we visited and everyone we met. The hotel in Cape Town was excellent. The Victoria Falls Hotel is beautiful and our guide, Esther, was a wealth of information about the area and the country.

When we first arrived at Little Makalolo we were greeted by a large herd of elephants, and a small herd of antelope. The Little Makalolo team was very efficient and helpful. Our guide, Livingston, was a joy to be with each day. He was excellent at spotting animals in the dark. Thank you for suggesting we bring gloves. I thought that was a little crazy but two mornings in Hwange were very cold and I was very happy to have the gloves!

Our stay at Mana Pools was great. Our guide, Gary, was a perfect match for us. With his help we were able to experience the peaceful serenity of the Zambezi River, as well as two very educational walks, including tracking a pride of lions. The other guides and guests were all very interesting and fun to talk with. We did not partake of the canoeing. It was very tempting, but both of us have done a fair amount of canoeing in the past and the thought of sitting in a canoe for several hours just wasn't very appealing.

Nothing prepared us for Pamushana. It was the perfect place to end our journey. And it's a very good thing it was our last camp because, no matter how nice the other camps were, they would have been a major come down after Pamushana. When we walked into our villa we were laughing from disbelief that something so beautiful and luxurious was out in the middle of nowhere! My husband spent his last day and a half on a sleeping and jacuzzi safari, while Jephath (our guide) and I hunted for white rhino and inspected the rock drawings. Our first night there we were within 20 feet of a black rhino, the last night we watched a black rhino drink 30 feet from our boat.

We were overwhelmed with the number of animals we saw especially at Hwange around the pans. We did see the Big Six - Lion, Leopard, Elephant, Hippopotamus, and Black and White Rhino. Our very first evening we came across a pride of 16 lions. The next evening we saw a smaller pride among whom were four one month old cubs - a rarity from what I was told. We never saw a grown male lion though we came close at Hwange, miss him by about 30 minutes.

The food everywhere was excellent. I didn't really know what to expect, but I certainly wasn't expecting the food to be as good as it was.

...we thoroughly enjoyed our time at Vundu.

The only other suggestion we have is to amend your packing list to say "External Flash for night photography" rather than simply "Flash". That is for people like me who are a little dense and think their built in flash will be just fine. We didn't realize we would be out so much in the dark and the built in flash just didn't do the trick.

I am so glad we were in Zimbabwe, and just Zimbabwe. Once we got to Victoria Falls, we were done with their immigration and customs, which is one of the least efficient processes that exists. More than that, we loved the people and we sometimes felt as if we had the country to ourselves. At most there were 5 cars at any animal sighting. Most of the time it was us and maybe one other. The economy of the country needs more tourism and now they have great advocates in us. I hope for their sake that the political situation remains stable.

Overall we were extremely pleased with our trip and I am looking forward to returning as soon as possible.

Windy Warner, Sep 2011