

Zambia

POP 15.5 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Chizombo (p580)
- ➔ Chiawa Camp (p587)
- ➔ Kapishya Hot Springs Lodge (p599)
- ➔ Ndole Bay Lodge (p602)
- ➔ Mukambi Plains Camp (p591)

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Sugarbush Cafe (p571)
- ➔ Courtyard Café (p604)
- ➔ Luangwa Bridge Camp (p578)
- ➔ Thorn Tree Guesthouse (p600)

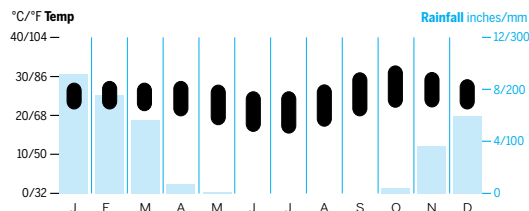
Why Go?

The rewards of travelling in Zambia are those of exploring remote, mesmerising wilderness as full of an astonishing diversity of wildlife as any part of Southern Africa. Adventures undertaken here will lead you deep into the bush where animals, both predators and prey, wander through unfenced camps, where night-time means swapping stories around the fire and where the human footprint is nowhere to be seen. Where one day you can canoe down a wide, placid river and the next raft through the raging rapids near world-famous Victoria Falls.

Though landlocked, three great rivers – the Kafue, the Luangwa and the Zambezi – flow through Zambia, defining both its geography and the rhythms of life for many of its people. For the independent traveller, however, Zambia is a logistical challenge, because of its sheer size, dilapidated road network and upmarket facilities. For those who do venture here, the relative lack of crowds means an even more satisfying journey.

When to Go

Lusaka



Late May–early Oct Dry season, with prime wildlife viewing; tourist high season.

Jun–Aug Dry, cooler temperatures and sometimes frosty nights.

Nov–Apr Blooming landscapes during the rainy ('emerald') season. Wildebeest and bat migration.


LUSAKA

All roads lead to Lusaka, the geographic, commercial and metaphorical heart of Zambia. However, the nation's capital and largest urban zone, with its mishmash of dusty tree-lined streets, bustling African markets, Soviet-looking high-rise blocks and modern commerce, doesn't easily justify exploration by the casual visitor. There are no real attractions, grand museums to drool over or historical treasures to unearth. Nonetheless, for some, the city's genuine African feel, cosmopolitan populace and quality restaurants and accommodation are reason enough to spend a night or two. If you feel like letting loose, expat bars and the home-grown nightclub scene will see you through to the wee hours.

Sights



Lusaka National Park

NATIONAL PARK

( 0955 472433; adult/child US\$30/15) The idea of seeing a rhino in the wild just 15km from the capital seems absurd, but this new national park (opened in 2015) allows you to do just that. Set over 46 sq km, it's home to eland, zebra, giraffe and wildebeest, among others. But it's the white rhino that brings people here. While you'll be able to tick it off from the list of Big Five, most likely you'll see them in their holding pen, so it can feel more like a zoo than national park.


Lilayi Elephant Nursery

WILDLIFE RESERVE

( 0211-840435; www.lilayi.com; adult/child/under 12yr ZMW50/20/free;  11.30am-1pm) On the southern outskirts of town is this elephant nursery set up by Game Rangers International (a Zambian conservationist NGO), which works with rescuing and rehabilitating orphaned elephants in Kafue National Park. You can see them being fed from 11am to 1.30pm daily; Monday is free entry. You can also do wildlife drives on its 650-hectare property. There's a lovely restaurant and lodge where, if you're staying, you can get a behind-the-scenes look at the elephants.

Presidential Burial Site National Monument


MAUSOLEUM

(Embassy Park; adult/child US\$15/7;  8.30am-4.30pm) This mausoleum is where the late Zambian presidents Levy Patrick Mwanawasa (1948-2008), Frederick Chiluba (1943-2011) and Michael Sata (1937-2014) are buried. Remarkably both Mwanawasa and

Sata died while in office; the latter's tomb will be completed in 2018. It's an interesting enough sight, but the US\$15 entry is a bit steep, though does include a guided tour.

Henry Tayali Visual Arts Centre

GALLERY

(www.henrytayaliartgallery.wordpress.com; Showgrounds, Lion Lane;  9am-5pm Mon-Fri, to 4pm Sat & Sun) A lovely space exhibiting quality contemporary works by local artists, and all are for sale.


Namwandwe Gallery

GALLERY

( 0976 608538, 0977 549802; www.namwandwe.com; Leopards Hill Rd; by donation;  8am-6pm) Featuring the impressive private collection of businessman and patron of the arts John Kapotwe, Namwandwe is hands-down the best in the country for contemporary Zambian art. The gallery space is within his private home (an attraction in itself) and features paintings, sculptures, masks and fabrics by both established and up-and-coming artists. It's located 15km southeast of the city centre.


Lusaka National Museum

MUSEUM

(Nasser Rd; adult/child US\$5/3;  9am-4.30pm) This big square box of a building resembling a Soviet-era Moscow ministry has upstairs galleries displaying exhibits on urban culture and Zambian history as well cultural, ethnographic and archaeological displays. Contemporary Zambian paintings and sculpture are shown downstairs.

Lusaka City Market




MARKET

(Lumumba Rd;  7am-5pm) Fronted by the chaotic and congested eponymously named bus station, as well as a veritable Maginot Line of sidewalk vendors, reaching the entrance to the Lusaka City Market is an achievement in and of itself. Unfortunately, while large, lively and packed to the rafters, the clothing and housewares sold in the warren of stalls aren't of much interest to the average traveller.

Sleeping

★Natwange Backpackers

HOSTEL \$

( 0966 303816, 0977 886240; www.natwangebackpackers.com; 6808 Kapuka Rd; dm/s/d incl breakfast with shared bathroom US\$12/30/40;  ) In quiet residential street, this lovely and secure home offers a relaxed atmosphere for independent travellers. Rooms are clean, though can be a little cramped, and all share bathrooms. It has plenty of lawn with fruit trees and a nice little pool and gym. There are several lounge areas to