

Exclusive South Luangwa - Lion and Leopard Country (11 days, 10 nights)



It can be debated long and hard which reserve in Africa is absolutely the best. In any case South Luangwa is high up on that list. The density of wildlife there is phenomenally high, whereas that of tourists is noticeably low. Lions as well as leopards are omnipresent and also wild dogs are regularly spotted here. The guiding is of a very high level and our camp guides are allowed to take guests on night game drives. With camps located alongside rivers and water pools, you are always surrounded by animals in this true wilderness. An exclusive experience you're not bound to ever forget.

Ingrid Vekemans, your tour leader and professional nature photographer, has been travelling to Africa for over 30 years and has lost her heart on the continent. She feels at home there and looks forward to sharing her knowledge and passion with the group.

This trip takes place in the high season for a reason. The high season is the dry season in Zambia. Therefore, the wildlife will be more concentrated around areas where water is available and the vegetation is much less thick. Hence, we will be able to spot many more animals than in the low season.

The trip is aimed at people who love nature and wildlife, and who love photographing it (of course non-photographing partners are also welcome!) Unlike normal group tours, we will be looking especially for photographic opportunities, and will take whatever time is required if the situation is interesting from a photographer's point of view. The group is small, which enables a personal approach and provides enough space in the vehicles for the photographic equipment - we will be using open 7-seater 4x4 vehicles for a maximum of 3 people per vehicle. Two vehicles will be our transport and Ingrid will split her time evenly between them.

Besides photographing together, and immediate advice and tips, there will be dedicated 'feedback' sessions after lunch, where a selection of photos from each participant can be discussed.

A typical day starts early, so we can make optimal use of the first, soft morning light. This often results in the most memorable photographs. Also, this is the time of the day where most animal activity can be seen. Most days we will have a small and very early breakfast and we will take a snack and hot drink we can enjoy enroute in a scenic area. In the late morning and early afternoon, when the temperature rises, you will be at the camp, relaxing and/or viewing photos, making a selection for the feedback session. Late afternoon we will set off again to take photos until the light disappears. We continue our drive after sunset in order to observe and photograph the nocturnal behaviour of the animals. (Please note that it is obviously not obligatory to participate in all game drives – often good photo opportunities exist within the camps themselves). Afterwards there is time to freshen up before dinner after which you can linger to discuss the events of the day or you may prefer the peace and quiet of your room or tent. After all, tomorrow will undoubtedly be another exciting day!

THIS SAFARI IS OPERATED BY



TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THIS SAFARI DIFFER FROM THE OTHER SAFARIS LEAD BY INGRID?

- The safari is not divided over a few reserves but takes place solely in South Luangwa. Even if there can never be a guarantee to see **wild dogs** (they cover long distances daily and at random) we are thus maximising our chances of an encounter with these fascinating hunters.
- Accommodation is in 3 **top luxury camps** in different locations **in the middle of the park**, on the banks of the Luangwa river or near a water hole. Hence the camps are havens of relaxation as well as places where you can just continue your photo safari. Because our camps are located deep inside the park, we will not see many other tourists
- The guides of our camps are permitted to do **night game drives** in South Luangwa. This enables us to conclude the afternoon safari with a drive in which we can observe and capture the nocturnal activities of various animals.
- We will also use a number of **hides**.
- 5 participants make our group very small. This ensures **extra personal follow-up and a lot of space and flexibility in the vehicles**.
- We will use **2 open vehicles** with 3 different levels. Low photography angles are possible.
- The safari begins and ends with a night in Lilongwe (Malawi). This allows for an overland drive to South Luangwa, which is not too long. This way we avoid having to take a domestic flight with its difficult restrictions as far as (hand) luggage is concerned.

Day 1

Our trip starts in Lilongwe (Malawi). During the course of the day the participants arrive in the international airport where they will be picked up and taken to the lodge. Depending on the time of arrival, you can enjoy the beautiful, landscaped gardens of this smallscale lodge with its uplifting pool, there could be a late afternoon briefing and/or we meet each other over dinner.



Day 2

After an early breakfast we set off in a private vehicle towards Zambia. We cross the border and reach our camp in South Luangwa around lunch time. We can enjoy this exclusive environment until we depart on our first afternoon game drive.



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Our smallscale camp is located on a meander in the Luangwa river where leopards often roam along the bank. Accommodation is in spacious chalets which are fully open during the day to wonderful river views. The en-suite bathrooms have double sinks, toilets and showers from which you can enjoy the enormous African skies.



Set back from the river on a lagoon are the dining room and swimming pool from which guests are often treated to elephants and other game coming down to drink during the day - unperturbed by our presence, providing us with unforgettable memories.



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Day 3-4

Further exploration of the area where we are staying. We will definitely be looking for leopards but are also hoping for an encounter with the fascinating wild dogs. Several troupes of wild dogs are present in South Luangwa, but they move daily, fast and unpredictable, over large distances. To see them, we will need a bit of luck.

Furthermore, lion and hyena numbers in South Luangwa are high, so an encounter with these predators is very likely. In addition, we will see several antelope species, among which puku and impala will often find each other's company. Herds of buffalo and elephants are bound to cross our path, as well as the Thornicroft giraffe, a giraffe species that only occurs in the Luangwa Valley. Also, Cookson's wildebeest and Crawshay's zebra are endemic to this area. Bushbuck, eland, waterbuck and kudu are common here and we might even come across the rare roan antelope. Hippos inhabit rivers and waterholes and will definitely be heard after sunset.



Moreover, South Luangwa hosts over 400 different bird species. From little bee-eater to saddle-billed stork: great and small, we will see them all.

Day 5

After our morning game drive we head far north towards our next camp, located on the banks of the Luangwa river. Here we will have lunch and enjoy our new environment before going on our first game drive in this new area.



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Our new home is a luxury tented camp nestled under a grove of mahogany trees. The spacious bedroom as well as the open-air bathroom enjoy a private view onto a long stretch of the river with its inhabitants and visitors. Each tent is designed for privacy and has its own verandah, but also the main area of the camp has different seating areas where one can relax (keeping the camera handy!).



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Day 6

Further exploration of the area around our second camp. Located in the Nsefu sector of South Luangwa, our camp is situated in exclusive wildlife territory. As we continue our search for wild dogs, we will seize every photo opportunity we come across. Also here, chances of encounters with lion and leopard are real and we will visit lagunes and waterholes where mammals and birds gather.



Day 7

After the morning game drive, we will drive to our last camp in South Luangwa, arriving in time for lunch.



This camp is a very small and authentic bush camp. Located near a waterhole deep in the national park, it attracts a great variety of mammals and birds. The camp has a hide right next to the waterhole where you can literally be only an arm's length away from an elephant.

The accommodation (the bedroom as well as the very spacious open-air bathroom) is built from natural materials, and mosquito gauze skylights above the bed allow you to experience sleeping under the stars. There is a thoughtful balance between back-to-nature simplicity and essential comforts.



Day 8-9

Our days here are split between morning and afternoon game drives and hide photography.

Not only do we have access to the camp's hide whenever we want, but we will also photograph from the southern carmine bee-eater hide. The latter is not a guarantee because the bee-eaters are migratory birds, and it is not 100% predictable when they will be in South Luangwa.

The southern carmine bee-eater hide is put in place every year in order to have an optimal view of the nesting colony. Often this is in a boat on the Luangwa river. We spend a morning here, with just our group, to extensively photograph these active birds.

Depending on where the hippos decide to hang out in the river, there will also be a hide put in place on the bank of the Luangwa river to observe and capture them from a low angle.

Evidently there is always the option to skip the group activity and to make extra use of the hide in our camp.



Day 10

Unfortunately, our adventure in South Luangwa has come to an end. After an early morning safari and a hearty brunch, we head back to Lilongwe. We will arrive there in the early evening. We will stay in the same lodge as on the first day of our trip.

Day 11

The trip ends after breakfast. The participants will be taken to the airport in time for their return flight.

ATTENTION: a change to the above travel schedule is always possible, if the circumstances dictate.

Non-exhaustive list of mammals that inhabit South Luangwa:

Bushbuck, Eland, Reedbuck, Cookson's Wildebeest, Lichtenstein's Hartebeest, Impala, Greater Kudu, Common Waterbuck, Roan antelope, Puku, Cape Buffalo, African Elephant, Thornicroft Giraffe, Hippo, Warthog, Crawshay's Zebra, African Wild Dog, Cape Genet, Spotted Hyena, Leopard, Lion, Striped Mongoose, Vervet Monkey, Yellow Baboon, ...

There are more than 400 **bird** species in South Luangwa of which you can find a handful of examples underneath:

Lilac-breasted Roller, Yellow-billed Stork, Saddle-billed Stork, Open-billed Stork, Great White Heron, African Wattled Lapwing, Hooded Vulture, White-headed vulture, White-backed Vulture, Bateleur, African Fish Eagle, Martial Eagle, Hammerkop, Sacred Ibis,

Red-billed Oxpecker, Little Bee-eater, Southern Carmine Bee-eater, Lilian's Lovebird, Marabu Stork, African Skimmer, Verreaux' Eagle Owl, Woodland Kingfisher, Pied Kingfisher, Malachite Kingfisher, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Giant Kingfisher, African Jacana, Blue Waxbill,...

On top of all this there is of course also a rich **insect and reptile world**, of which the Nile Crocodile is the largest representative...



PRACTICALITIES

TUI

The safari is organised by TUI tours, part of TUI BELGIUM. The TUI Group is the largest tourism group in the world.

You can apply for your reservation or ask for a non-binding quote with the TUI headquarters. To this end you can use the 'PRICE INQUIRY' button on the safari page of the website www.ingridvekemans.com.

The invoice and booking terms and conditions will be sent to you by TUI. TUI's general and special conditions are applicable. You can find all information on:

<https://www.tui.be/nl/reisvoorwaarden>

Special cancellation conditions for this trip: until 61 days before departure: 50%; from 60 until 31 days before departure: 75%; less than 30 days before departure: 100%.

The **price** of the trip is 10950€ and is based on sharing a double or twin room. The supplement for a single room will be 1990€. An advance of 500€ will be requested at the time of reservation of the trip, a further 3000€ as soon as departure is guaranteed. Price subject to change in case of increase of local taxes or park income fees, and fuel increases.

Safari period: 30 August until 9 September 2028

The price is inclusive of accommodation in exclusive and luxury lodges and tented camps (10 nights), all meals and drinks (except premium drinks) except in Lilongwe where drinks are not included, laundry service except in Lilongwe, game drives (two per day from day 3 until day 9) in two open 4x4 vehicles, experienced driver/guides, park entry fees, all transfers, guiding and advice about the animals and how to photograph them, photo analyses and an experienced and passionate tour leader!

The price excludes the international flight and related taxes, passport costs, travel insurance, drinks on day 1 and on day 10, premium drinks, tips, personal expenses.

Number of participants: 5 participants (minimum and maximum)

Minimum age for participants: 16

As soon as the number of participants is reached, you will be contacted by TUI. TUI will then make you flight proposals for the **international flights**. You can then choose whether to book your flight through TUI or to take care of your international flights yourself. The international flights can be booked after 1 September 2027 at the earliest.

Insurance:

It is strongly recommended for every participant to have cancellation and extensive travel insurance.

Force majeure:

The photo safaris are normally accompanied by Ingrid Vekemans. Only if Ingrid Vekemans would be prevented through force majeure an alternative - equivalent replacement will be sought in view of a good execution of the travel contract.

Luggage restrictions:

In order to be sure to have enough freedom to move around the vehicle on travel days, maximum one soft travel bag (dimensions maximum h 40cm x d 40cm x l 80cm) per person is allowed as well as the camera bag. Only if every participant sticks to this restriction, the trip will be comfortable for all. The maximum allowed weight of your luggage will depend on the airline with which you book your flight.

Requirements for the participants:

Beginners, as well as more experienced photographers (and their partners) are welcome to join this trip. In order to get the most out of the photographic opportunities, it is however advised that you know the basics of photography (regarding ISO/shutter speed/aperture and light metering), such as you might learn in a basic digital photography workshop. The trip is physically not very demanding because we will always be photographing out of a vehicle or photographic hide. The game drives, however, will start very early in the morning. In the middle of the day **temperatures** could rise over 30°C. A hat and good skin protection are necessary in the open safari vehicles. Participants have to be in good health.

Participants have to take care of any necessary **vaccinations and medications**. For more information, check <https://www.itg.be/en>. The information on this website needs to be evaluated by the participant in consultation with a qualified physician. Participants have to make sure they have a **valid international passport (valid at least another 6 months after the date of return)**. **At the time of publication of this document a visa is no longer needed for Malawi or for Zambia**. For the last update: see <http://diplomatie.belgium.be>.

Finally, respect for nature and the animals is a must!

Participants have to be aware that Africa sometimes requires patience and understanding: roads can be bumpy and things may not work as efficiently as at home. The pace of life is slower, which should ultimately benefit us all...

