

COWABUNGA FLY-CAMP
(Correspondence for Brian only)

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Safaris since 1974.

COWABUNGA MAIN CAMP
(Correspondence for Gary only)

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Attention!

The following itinerary is meant to help your safari planning. Since 1974, we at Cowabunga Safaris have done many, many kinds and variations of safaris to Namibia and Zimbabwe.

This is only one kind of safari. Do you want something more upscale? Do you want something more rustic and participatory? If you have a different safari in mind, wish to stay longer, or want to travel to other parts of the continent, tell us. We can make it happen.

NAMIBIA & ZIMBABWE: "The Soul of Africa"

Place of Mirages

Sanctuary of Wildlife

River of Legend

Smoke that Thunders

Length: 20 days from the USA; 17 days in Africa

Accommodations: 2 nights in hotels; 8 nights in safari lodges; 7 nights in luxury tented camps. All accommodations have private, hot-water showers and ensuite toilets. All the places Cowabunga stays are in breathtaking surroundings in or near world-renowned wildlife areas. Pictures of accommodations are available on request.

Luxury Tented Camps: An additional explanation... Our luxury tented camps are not the same as the camps you might find on a weekend camping trip in the USA. The tents are large - they are big enough to walk into and stand in -- with comfortable twin beds complete with linen and duvets. All tents are bug-proof with mesh windows, have nightstands next to the beds, and, as has been mentioned, possess en suite bathroom facilities.

Fitness Level: Almost any level of fitness can be accommodated on this safari due to the wide variety of activities available: optional treks and walks (at a pace set by the individual), game-drives (during the day *and* at night, in open vehicles with no sides and no top), canoeing the Zambezi River (you may help paddle, or sit back and let one of the guides do so), even whitewater rafting below Victoria Falls!

Group size: Cowabunga keeps groups small, to better share Africa. Unless otherwise stated, this type of safari will have no more than 10 Safarists. A custom-designed itinerary might have fewer still.

Food: You should NOT go on this type of safari to lose weight! All meals cater to western preferences, are first-class, and excellently prepared. Chefs make exquisite cuisine using a wide array of meats, pastas, and fresh vegetables and fruits grown in the area. Desserts are delectable and overwhelming - so much so, we encourage all Safarists to practice the Cowabunga mantra: to "Eat dessert first, because life is so uncertain.")

Water: Treated drinking water is provided in some of the places we stay. Everywhere bottled water is available for purchase.

Stay Longer: Experiencing all Africa has to offer is a once-in-a-lifetime privilege for most. Accordingly, some Safarists like to stay longer. We at Cowabunga Safaris understand! If, after this safari, you wish to do additional activities or to continue on to other parts of the continent, we can help. In fact, given our love of the continent, you can bet we'll beg to join you!

Detailed Briefings: Cowabunga provides in-depth written briefings for all Safarists after they sign-on for any safari. Furthermore, when possible, Cowabunga

conducts face-to-face briefings approximately three months before departure. For those who can't make the face-to-face briefings, a detailed transcript of questions and answers is sent to them. Gary, Brian and Nancy always stand ready to brief Safarists at a moment's notice via fax, phone, e-mail or in-person.

-- THE ADVENTURE --

ETOSHA PAN -- HWANGE NATIONAL PARK -- ZAMBEZI VALLEY -- VICTORIA FALLS

Day 1 En Route

Today we depart the USA for our South African Airways flight to Cape Town. (D)

Day 2 Cape Town

A mid-day arrival in Cape Town where we are met and transferred to the Cape Grace Hotel, located in the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront. The hotel is set on its own promontory surrounded by water on three sides so that all rooms have views of either Table Mountain, the yacht marina or a working harbor. The Victoria & Alfred Waterfront has a variety of shops, museums, restaurants and the Two Oceans Aquarium, which exhibits species from both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. (B)D

Day 3 Ongava Lodge

It's back to the Cape Town airport this morning for our South African Airways flight to Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. At Windhoek we go through Customs and Immigration and transfer to an Air Namibia flight for Etosha. We spend the next three nights at Ongava Lodge, in the Ongava Game Reserve which borders Etosha. B/(L/)D

Days 4 & 5 Ongava Lodge

Ongava Lodge consists of chalets built out of natural rock and thatch. Each has an en suite bathroom with flush toilets, a bath and a hot-water shower. The main lounge, pub and dining area is under thatch and is situated close to the top of a hill with wonderful views across the plains below. There is a pool as well.

Morning game drives in safari vans usually are excursions into Etosha while afternoon game drives in 4x4 open vehicles are spent in the Ongava Reserve. Night game drives, walks, and hides are available in Ongava. Etosha has good concentrations of elephant, lion, leopard, black rhino and all of Namibia's plains game including springbok, gemsbok and hartebeest. Ongava also has white rhino on the reserve so guests can experience a wonderful variety

of animals during their stay. Birdlife is good with ostrich, pygmy falcon and raptors in abundance.

We spend time on the game trails each day. When we come to a waterhole we stop and watch for a while just to see what might appear. B/L/D

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ETOSHA PAN -- PLACE OF MIRAGES

Etosha National Park is one of the most extraordinary wildlife sanctuaries in the world. Covering 22,270 sq. km., this is undoubtedly one of the most important game parks on the sub-continent.

The heart of the Park is the extensive Etosha Pan. Geologists believe that it was an inland lake millions of years ago, fed by the Kunene River. After the Kunene changed its course to the sea, the once vast lake shrank to its present size. Depending on the season, the pan may be a shallow lake with large flocks of birds, or it may look like a large white dry salt pan. In either event it is a fascinating area. Birdlife is prolific with over 325 species recorded, including the crimson-breasted shrike, which is Namibia's emblem bird. From June to August large herds of zebra, blue wildebeest, red hartebeest, springbok and gemsbok migrate from west to east in the Park. They congregate around the Namutoni Plains where there is water year round. (Namutoni is also famous for its picturesque Fort.) Etosha is known for its kudu, rare black-faced impala, and bone chewing giraffes. Lions are commonly seen, but cheetah and leopard are elusive.

Gary and Brian have taken some magnificent photos at Etosha waterholes, but it does require patience. One of the most dramatic waterhole scenes Gary's ever witnessed took place in Etosha, when he watched for hours as a pregnant female gemsbok standing at the edge of the clearing got up her courage to come to the waterhole to drink -- on her knees!

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Days 6-8 Mokuti Lodge

After Ongava Lodge, we leave for Mokuti Lodge on the eastern side of the Etosha Pan. We travel in a leisurely manner game viewing all the way. Our route takes us along the southern edge of the Park.

We overnight for three nights at Mokuti in rooms with en suite facilities. There is a nice swimming pool on the grounds, a curio shop and the Marula Bar. Meals are served in either the Onduli dining room or the Tambuti a la carte restaurant. B/L/D

Day 9 Makalolo Plains Camp

This morning we fly out of Namibia to Victoria Falls Airport where we connect onto our flight to Hwange Airport just outside Hwange National Park. We are met and transferred by charter flight deep into a remote area of Hwange.

Makalolo Plains Camp is a new camp built on the site of the original Makalolo Camp. Accommodations are in large, comfortable, tastefully decorated tented rooms with en suite facilities. The living area includes a dining room, pub, plunge pool and an open fire area for evening fireside bush tales. B/L/D

Days 10-11 Makalolo Plains Camp

Game drives these two days are in a remote area of Hwange National Park where we should find many animals and few tourists. We'll stop at waterholes and sit quietly waiting and watching for wildlife to come drink. Drinks (for humans) and activities (walks with armed guides) are included at Makalolo. B/L/D

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HWANGE - SANCTUARY OF WILDLIFE

Makalolo is a collection of small camps which have exclusive use of a massive concession area within Hwange National Park. Gary has been visiting this area for twenty years and has seen some remarkable sights (including two male sable antelope in a dominance battle where one pushed the other into a waterhole), and has taken some prize winning photos here (elephants silhouetted against a sunset taken from an underground hide).

The Makalolo area is ecologically diverse, including vast, open, palm fringed plains, grasslands, acacia woodlands, and mopane forests. This ensures a varied food "pantry" which feeds great numbers of animals year round — including elephant, buffalo, sable, roan, giraffe, wildebeest, impala and sometimes even gemsbok. It is one of the best areas for predators: lion, leopard, wild dog, hyena, and cheetah are regularly sighted along with the smaller African wild cat, serval, honey badger, and civet. There are a number of waterholes which attract game in large concentrations especially during the winter months (when we'll be there). For the bird watcher, Makalolo offers a wonderful range of birding — from Miombo species right through to Kalahari birds.

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Day 12 Camp Zambezi

Today is a travel day as we fly from Hwange Airport on Air Zimbabwe to Kariba Airport. Just before landing at Kariba you may get a glimpse of Lake Kariba, the second largest man-made lake in the world. At Kariba we take a charter flight to Mana Pools air strip

where we are met by a crew from Camp Zambezi, run by a longtime buddy of Brian's, James "Vundu" Varden. We have a game drive on our way to our tented camp on the shores of the Zambezi River. B/L/D

Days 13-15 Camp Zambezi

Now we're truly on safari! Each tent has a canvas wash basin for washing hands and face. Hot water is always available for a bucket shower. We dine al fresco at a table overlooking the river with a fantastic view. (Don't forget to bring camera and binoculars to meals.) The dining table is moved according to the sun, so that it's under shade. Near the middle of the camp site is an enormous termite mound (perfect for group photos). We are the only ones in the camp (except for plenty of camp staff to pamper us). The Camp setting is a scene from your African memory bank that you'll never forget.

Activities here include game drives in Mana Pools National Park, canoeing on the Zambezi River, and walks with armed Professional Guides. The wildlife dictate our daily agenda: when we wake up in the morning the Guides will suggest what we do first based on what they know of what the animals are doing. It will be a laid back Safari experience, and if we encounter an unusual species or an exciting event we'll take our time. The Camp staff is flexible and will serve our meals whenever we show up!

We have three full days to enjoy all the attractions of the area. All drinks at Camp Zambezi are complimentary, from tea, to coffee, to sodas, beer, wine and spirits. Brian encourages you to try a Zimbabwean "spook n' diesel"! B/L/D

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ZAMBEZI - RIVER OF LEGEND

During the dry season when we are there, Mana Pools has one of the highest concentrations of wildlife on the continent. The 845 square mile park is uniquely characterized by fertile river terraces reaching from the slow moving Zambezi River inland for several miles. Small ponds and pools such as Chine Pools and Long Pool were formed as the river's course slowly drifted northward. Species commonly seen in the park include elephant, buffalo, waterbuck, kudu, zebra, eland, impala, bushbuck, lion, and crocodile. Hippos are commonly seen (and heard) in the river in front of our camp. Large varieties of both woodland and water birds are present.

One of the best ways to experience the soul of the African bush is by canoeing on the Zambezi. Our canoes hold two to three people and you may actively participate by paddling if you wish. Or you can sit in the middle and just enjoy the scenery along the slow moving river. The canoes don't seem to bother the animals — they come down to the banks to drink, and often elephant swim

across the river right in front of us. The birdlife is entrancing and at certain spots where the river bank has high cliffs there are nests burrowed into the bluff by the magnificent carmine bee eaters.

The northern hemisphere's summer is an excellent time to be at Mana — it is during Mana's dry season. The apple ring acacias (*Acacia albida*) will be coming into leaf, when most other trees are bare. These acacias provide welcome shade during the hot days and grow masses of pods, whose shape gives the tree its popular name. Elephants love these pods and since there are several large acacias next to the camp site. Don't be surprised to see elephants when you walk out of your tent!

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Days 16-17 Victoria Falls Safari Lodge

We return to the Mana air strip to catch our charter flight back to Kariba where we connect on to an Air Zimbabwe flight to Victoria Falls International Airport. We are met and transferred to the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge for two nights. Built on a plateau, it overlooks Zambezi National Park. The Main lodge, dining room, bar and lounge all face the waterhole where animals come to drink all year round. The ambience of the Lodge and rooms is totally African with the use of local hardwoods, clay tiles, thatch, rustic finishes and vibrant fabrics.

Each bedroom has its own balcony and private bathroom with corner bath and pressure shower, hair dryer, and telephone! Light meals are served on the terrace by the swimming pool and dinner is upstairs in the Makuwa-Kuwa Restaurant. In the apex of the thatched roof is a nature library.

A myriad of activities are available during your time here. A concierge desk in Reception has information about events, time schedules, transportation and costs. A shuttle runs from the Lodge to the Falls and the town with shops selling everything from inexpensive curios to very nice jewelry, carvings, etc. A recent addition is the Elephant Walk, an upscale shopping mall. An optional opportunity is the "Flight of the Angels" in a small aircraft that flies right over the falls for an unsurpassed view. For those who wish to keep their feet on the ground, a visit to the famous Crocodile Farm gives an opportunity to see all aspects of crocodile ranching, which is quite a big business. An evening option is the tribal dancing by the Shangaan and Mkishi tribes. It is an unforgettable sight as traditional folk tales are told in dance form accompanied by indigenous musical instruments. B/L/D

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VICTORIA FALLS - SMOKE THAT THUNDERS

Aptly known as Mosi-aotunya (the smoke that thunders), Victoria Falls is the greatest waterfall in the world. At the height of the rainy season, 140 million gallons of water a minute cascade over the falls! There is so much water that it forms a mist rising up from the bottom of the falls and from a distance looks like smoke: hence the name.

The first glimpse of the falls is breath-taking. The falls span two countries: Zambia and Zimbabwe. A path on the Zimbabwe side allows excellent viewing of Devils Cataract, the Main Falls, Danger Point, and the Peace Bridge leading to Zambia. Walking along the edge of the cataract across from the falls is an awe inspiring experience. It is totally unspoiled and just as it was when Dr. Livingstone saw it for the first time on 17 November 1855. The mist from the falls creates a unique small rain forest habitat with ferns and "strangle" vines. Often vervet monkeys are seen and occasionally a shy bushbuck hiding in the undergrowth. There truly is a very special magic that you feel as you look across the chasm at the Falls and feel the mist on your skin. It's incredible.

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Day 18 Cape Grace

Our South African Airways flight to Johannesburg leaves this morning, where we continue on South African Airways to Cape Town and overnight at the Cape Grace Hotel. This evening we are free for dinner and have our choice of many fine restaurants on the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront. B/(L)

Day 19 En Route

Today is free for sightseeing, shopping or relaxation. Lunch is on our own. In late afternoon we meet for our farewell dinner before we are transferred to the Cape Town International Airport for our overnight flight to the USA. B/D

Day 20 Home

Early morning arrival in the USA where we clear customs and immigration and connect on to our flights home. (B)



Safaris since 1974.