

COWABUNGA FLY-CAMP
(Correspondence for Brian only)

Cowabunga Fly-Camp
Attn: Brian Hesse
423 W. Clark
Clarinda, IA 51632 USA

Telephone: (+001) 712 542 1403
Mobile: (+001) 785 221 0309
mail: info@cowabungasafaris.com
:bsite: www.cowabungasafaris.com



COWABUNGA MAIN CAM
(Correspondence for Gary only)

Cowabunga Safaris (Pty.) Ltd
Attn: Gary K. Clarke
Private Bag 4863
Gage Centre Station
Topeka, Kansas 66604-0863 U

Telephone: (+001) 785 272 764
Fax: (+001) 785 272 4746

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 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.

ZIMBABWE: "ZAMBEZI BUSH TRAILS"

Length: 15 days from the USA; 12 days in Africa

Accommodations: 1 night in a hotel; 1 night in a safari lodge; 10 nights in luxury tented camps. All accommodations have private, hot-water showers and en suite 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 believes in keeping 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 all 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 horseback ride in Botswana or other parts of Zimbabwe, go to Cape Town, South Africa, 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 --

Day 1 EN ROUTE

We board our South Africa Airways overnight flight to Johannesburg, South Africa. (D)

Day 2 JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

We have an afternoon arrival in Johannesburg where we are met and transferred to our hotel. Depending on the time of our arrival, Brian can arrange a tour of Soweto, the famous township from where anti-apartheid activists like Nelson Mandela and Desmond

Tutu carried out their struggle. Dinner tonight, our first night in Africa, is on our own, but Brian or Gary can take us to any number of nearby restaurants. (B)

Day 3 MATOPO HILLS NATIONAL PARK

We fly to Bulawayo in southern Zimbabwe and are met by staff from Camp Amalinda, who transfer us to the Camp. Our hosts here are Dave and Lynda Bennet and their Camp is one of the most unusual found anywhere. There are eight individually thatched rooms which are set into the huge boulders, each with en suite facilities. The bar and lounge are nestled in a Bushman shelter with a panoramic view of the Matobo Hills. At a lower level is the open air dining room with its massive teak table, and down from that (built on a granite slab) is a plunge pool. The kopje rock shelters throughout this area were used by the ancient Bushmen and some even have Bushmen paintings. Camp Amalinda was featured in *Conde Naste Traveler* (March 1999) in an article entitled "The Ultimate Safari".

Days 4-5 MATOPO HILLS NATIONAL PARK

During these two days we will explore the area of Matopo Hills National Park. Described as strange and eerie where stone gods rise up in profusion, Matopo Hills has been called the most majestic granite scenery on earth. On top of hundreds of kopjes are precariously balanced boulders that have been eroded by weather and separated from each other. It's only natural that this area would be influential as a religious force to the Matabele, the predominant ethnic group in the area. It is here that Lord Baden-Powell got his inspiration for the Girl Guide movement and Cecil Rhodes is buried at World's View. Matopo Hills is known for its caves with stunning examples of pre-historic art.

Living in the kopjes are the animals adapted to rock habitat: hyrax, klipspringers, baboons, and the black eagle (the highest concentration in the world). Other species to be found are the endangered white rhino, sable antelope, impala, wildebeest, zebra, buffalo, giraffe and vervet monkeys. The only predators are leopard and jackal. Game drives, a nature trail walk and bareback elephant rides are among the activities available during our stay. B/L/D

Day 6 HWANGE NATIONAL PARK

We have a charter flight to Hwange National Park where we are met by Staff from The Hide. Our trip to the camp is actually a game drive so you'll want to have your camera and binoculars handy.

Accommodations are in large luxury canvas tents with en suite showers, toilets and handbasins. Each tent has a large front porch where guests can relax and view the game at the pan. The central feature is a large thatch 'A' frame dining and lounge area, both with a magnificent view of the pan.

Unlike most other Safari camps in the area, the Hide is located on the eastern boundary of Hwange National Park. Game viewing is in open 4x4 vehicles in the early morning, late morning and late afternoon. Our last activity of the day is a night drive with a spotlight.

There is a luxury carpeted underground hide at the pan for game viewing and photography. During the peak viewing dry months (May-Nov) there is a constant flow of animals to the pan. You don't have to leave camp to see wildlife when you are at The Hide. Tonight we should hear night sounds outside our tents. B/L/D

Days 7-8 HWANGE NATIONAL PARK

Since much of our time is spent on game drives we are lucky to have Londamela's specially equipped vehicles. Dave uses Toyota 4x4 Land Cruisers which have been stripped down and rebuilt from the chassis up, add on all the little extras that make our time in the vehicle more comfortable and safe. We are also fortunate to have Professional Guides trained in Zimbabwe. It takes several years to become a Professional Guide and they must successfully pass a training and examination process. They are fully conversant in mammals, birds, trees, grasses, fish as well as being expert mechanics and drivers. Both Dave and Lynda are Professional Guides.

Walks with a Pro Guide are encouraged, with the distance and intensity of walks entirely at the guests discretion. Game drives in Hwange often consist of going to a borehole (or waterhole) and sitting patiently. The animals are fairly relaxed as long as you stay in a vehicle and this does not deter them from coming to drink.

Hwange National Park is the epitome of bush country. It is Zimbabwe's largest National Park with one of the most unspoiled wildlife sanctuaries in the world. The variety of species is greater than any other park in the country with 107 species of mammals and over 400 species of birds. Wildlife we'll watch for include elephant, giraffe, zebra, greater kudu, impala, buffalo, sable, wildebeest, tsessebe, black-backed jackal, lion, hyena and cheetah. We'll specifically be on the lookout for painted dog. B/L/D

Day 9 VICTORIA FALLS SAFARI LODGE

Today we have a new African experience — a luxury rail tour along a stretch of tracks of the famous Cape to Cairo railway line. We'll travel by steam engine from the town of Dete (a famous hunting crossroads in the early days) to Victoria Falls. (Gary points out that this will be his first group of Safarists to be in Dete — but just for a short time.) We are served an elegant lunch while on the train. We'll be reliving a fascinating period of early history in the exploration of the African continent.

We are met and transferred to the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge. 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 definitely 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.

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 which 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 strangler vines. Often vervet monkeys are seen and occasionally a shy bushbuck hiding in the undergrowth.

Victoria Falls has a very special magic. Stand at the edge and hear the great roar. Let the mists refresh and embrace you and be spellbound by the majesty of this great spectacle. You will be enchanted with this wonderful area, the more so since it is untouched and unspoiled by man.

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. An optional opportunity is the "Flight of the Angels" in a small aircraft that flies right over the falls for an unsurpassed view. 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 local indigenous musical instruments. A concierge's desk is in Reception: just ask there for information on activities in Vic Falls. B/L/D

Day 10 MANA POOLS NATIONAL PARK

Today we drive to the airport for our flight to Kariba (on the shores of Lake Kariba). Here we catch a charter flight to Mana Pools National Park. We are met at the air strip by Garth Thompson and his staff who drive us to the special tented camp set up just for our group on the banks of the Zambezi River. Between the air strip and our camp site we'll pass several different habitat zones caused by the changes in elevation: from scrub bush to mopane woodland to huge mahogany and acacia trees.

We spend the next four nights here. Garth and Gary have been doing Safaris for many years and certain routines have developed in their friendship (including practical jokes). Though a mud wallow in the Zambezi River is not mandatory for Safarists, if you catch them at it you may want to jump in and join the fun -- it's one of the most relaxing experiences you'll ever have. B/L/D

Days 11-13 MANA POOLS NATIONAL PARK

Mana Pools National Park is situated in the northern part of Zimbabwe and bounded by the Zambezi River with the blue mountains of Zambia ascending to the heavens on the other side. At this site the river is the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia. The Park is characterized by small ponds and pools formed as the river's course slowly drifted northward. The "apple ring" acacias are a particular favorite of elephants, and elephants abound in the park.

During our stay at Mana Pools we have the option of game drives in open vehicles, walks, and canoeing -- all with Professional Guides. You needn't have any canoeing experience to enjoy the river. The canoes hold either two or three people and float leisurely down the slow-moving Zambezi. A vehicle awaits us on the shore to drive us back to camp. It's pure bliss with nothing more on your mind than listening to the cry of the fish eagle, watching the brilliantly colored carmine bee-eaters fly in and out of their nests in the bank, photographing Cape buffalo on the top of the bank, and watching elephant as they cross the river.

Game drives are leisurely at Mana Pools. Garth's Guides are excellent spotters and trackers and are constantly alert for signals indicating wildlife activity in the area. These are not the kind of game drives where you photograph an elephant and then rush off to find a buffalo. Animals to watch for are impala, lion, waterbuck, bushbuck, eland, jackal, hyena, elephant and if we're lucky, painted dog.

Camp Zambezi consists of full sized walk-in tents set on the banks of the Zambezi River. Bucket showers and toilets are enclosed by canvas on four sides with no roof. Garth's staff keeps a fire going all day for hot water -- and there's nothing as refreshing after a game drive as a hot shower with the sky for a ceiling. There are four toilets and four showers to eight tents. And the Camp Staff makes your bed!

The campsite is on a long established elephant trail and huge mature bull elephants sometimes wander by as we're eating lunch . . . or taking a shower. It is quite a privilege to be in their presence and accepted by them in their territory.

All meals are served outside and there is a campfire every evening. In the morning the campfire is stoked again and coffee and tea are most welcome. Nights can be cool here; daytimes are warm enough for shorts, but not humid. Each night we fall asleep listening to the hippos snorting in the river -- an unusual but very satisfying lullaby. B/L/D

Day 14 EN ROUTE

Today is unique in the variety of transportation modes we experience and the ground we cover in just one day. From canoes on the Zambezi to Land Rovers through the bush to a charter flight from a dirt air strip to scheduled commercial flights and finally an international departure from the continent. The early explorers would never believe it possible. We take a little of the bush with us: in our hearts and on our clothes. Our

travels take us from Mana Pools to Kariba to Harare (the capital of Zimbabwe) to Johannesburg, and then on to our overnight flight to Cape Town and Miami. B(L/D)

Day 15 HOME

After an early morning arrival in the USA, we connect on to our home cities. The spirit of our Safari lingers on despite Africa now being half way around the world from us. (B)



Safaris since 1974.