



*Terra Nova Tours - Your ultimate African DMC partner
with unmatched expertise in Southern Africa*

Travel Advice - Zimbabwe

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Travel Advice - Zimbabwe

Intro

Zimbabwe is a land dense with history and natural beauty. It sits between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers amidst the magnificent Victoria Falls, but there is much more to the country that can be explored. Victoria Falls is a stunning prelude to natural wonders abounding in this country. Zimbabwe has a wealth of tours and trips to suit you. From astounding engineering feats like the dam wall at the man-made Lake Kariba to the pristine mountains of the Eastern Highlands, this country is rich in contrasts and boasts a diverse range of wildlife. Explore the mysteries of the Great Zimbabwe Ruins built centuries ago or experience the majesty of the great elephant and buffalo herds of Mana Pools National Park. With its National Parks and rich cultural history, your first trip to Zimbabwe is unlikely to be your last.

Languages & Local Lingo

Languages

In Zimbabwe, languages reflect the history and multiculturalism of the country. The nation has 16 official languages: Chewa, Chibarwe, English, Kalanga, Koi-san, Nambya, Ndau, Ndebele, Shangani, Shona, Sign Language, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Venda and Xhosa. The three most widely spoken languages in the nation are English, Shona, and Ndebele. A majority of the population speaks Shona as their first language and ChiShona as their second language. English, however, is Zimbabwe's official language.

Local Lingo

Mudhudhudhu	Motorbike/motorcycle
Jest	A meal or food made from ground corn or mealies
Amaganso / Bag / chiBag / umkwere / isikwara	Money, cash money
Shinga	You are courageous/brave
Sadza	A staple food in Zimbabwe. Porridge.
Shongololo	A millipede which curls up into a pinwheel-shaped coil when disturbed.
Mudhudhudhu	Motorrad/Motorrad
Jest	Mahlzeit oder ein Lebensmittel aus gemahlenem Mais oder Mehl



Amaganso / Bag / chiBag / umkwere / isikwara	Geld, Bargeld
Shinga	Du bist mutig/brav
Sadza	Ein Brei, der Grundnahrungsmittel in Simbabwe ist
Shongololo	Tausendfüßler, der sich zu einer stecknadelradförmigen Spirale zusammenrollt, wenn er gestört wird

Food & Beverages

Food in Zimbabwe is delicious, and interesting game meats such as warthogs and crocodiles are readily available in most towns and tourist areas. In the major urban areas, a variety of international restaurants are also available. While the local diet includes tasty peanut-based stews, wild mushroom soup and starchy staples.

- Sadza: A stiff maize meal porridge served with meats and stews.
- Nhedzi: Wild mushroom soup
- Bota: Porridge flavoured with peanut butter, milk, butter or jam and traditionally eaten for breakfast.
- Dovi: Traditional peanut butter stew with meat and/or vegetables
- Mapopo Candy: Papaya cooked in and dusted with sugar.
- Mopane Worms: A large insect usually dried or fried as a protein-rich snack or sometimes added to stews.
- Mupotohayi: Traditional homemade cornbread
- Whawha: Traditional maize beer

Money

Currency

The official currency of Zimbabwe is the Zimbabwean Dollar.

Most organisations have now bought a US Dollar Licence from the Zimbabwe government. This allows them to legally trade in US Dollars and prices are now allowed to be displayed and charged in USD.

The value-added tax is charged at a rate of 14.5% at the point of sale. All domestic taxes due by exporters on foreign currency receipts can now be paid both in foreign currency and local currency. Under the new arrangement, an exporter who receives foreign currency at a 40% surrender ratio will pay taxes on the 40% in Zimbabwe Dollars and the 60% in foreign currency. VAT on goods and services that are consumed cannot be refunded.



Average Expenses

95% of all Game Lodges in Zimbabwe are Fully Inclusive of meals and drinks. Therefore, there are very little additional costs for you to any of our Terra Nova itineraries.

If you are in one of the towns, all of this depends on where you go, but these are the average expenses:

- 3-course meal for two people – Z\$ 18,095 (EUR/USD/GBP 50) (depending on the local restaurant, excluding drinks)
- Domestic beer (0.5 litre) – Z\$ 725 (EUR/USD/GBP 2)
- Cappuccino – Z\$ 540 (EUR/USD/GBP 1.5)
- Soft Drinks (eg. Coke/ Pepsi) (0.33 bottle) – Z\$ 540 (EUR/USD/GBP 1.5)
- Still water (0.33 bottle) – Z\$ 360 (EUR/USD/GBP 1)

Gratuities / Tips

Most Southern and Eastern African employees are paid a low base salary and are therefore reliant on tips. You are welcome to leave a tip for the good service received during your Terra Nova visit. But how much is appropriate? This is what we would recommend our Terra Nova clients:

- Overland Guides and Safari Guides: USD 10 p/p and per day (EUR/GBP 10)
- Private Guides: USD 20 p/p and per day (EUR/GBP 20)
- Trackers and/or Butlers: USD 5 p/p and per day (EUR/GBP 5)
- Lodge Staff: USD 5 p/p and per day (EUR/GBP 5)
- Assistance at Petrol Station (only for self-drives): USD 0,30 (EUR/GBP 0,30)

We include as many fees and expenses as possible in your Terra Nova program, so you do not have to worry about them while travelling. It's important to note, though, that some fees and levies are not pre-bookable and must be covered at the time of entry to a park, etc.

We generally exclude:

- Additional meals not specified in the itinerary
- Additional Entrance fees and Conservation Levies
- Fuel & toll fees (for self-drive tours)
- Personal extras such as tips, laundry services, Roaming etc.
- Private Expenses
- International and/or domestic flights (we of course ensure that all necessary flights are included in all of our Fly-in programs)
- Visa and Visa Fees (if applicable)
- Travel Insurance

- Any new government taxes, levies or industry increases that are beyond Terra Nova's control.

Safety & Health

Safety

As far as personal safety is concerned, we believe visitors have little to worry about. Particularly when travelling on an organized trip and staying at a lodge, camp or hotel. Safari guides ensure your safety at all times - pay close attention to instructions and follow the park's rules. Cities in Zimbabwe are relatively safe; petty theft and pickpocketing are the most common crimes. When leaving banks and cash points, remain vigilant and don't display large sums of cash. As anywhere else, taking a few simple precautions will reduce your risk of being harmed when venturing out unguided in the city.

Health

When visiting Zimbabwe, you can expect to find top-quality healthcare facilities and highly trained medical staff. Private hospitals will be happy to assist you by providing you with take-out travel insurance. In the absence of travel insurance, you will be required to pay a lump sum upfront.

Please keep in mind that tourism in Zimbabwe is focused around National Parks and Game Lodges, and many, if not all of them, have emergency medical procedures in place. Whether it is immediate medical attention on-site or helicopter access to nearby world-class health facilities.

It is essential to stay up to date on your vaccinations when you travel, such as Polio, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Hepatitis A/B, etc. You should consult your doctor, pharmacist, or travel clinic to determine what precautions and/or vaccinations you need when travelling. Contact them before departing as preventative measures may take a while.

Antimalarials are recommended year-round in the country's Zambezi Valley and Victoria Falls areas. The rest of the country is mainly at risk from November to June. Harare and Bulawayo present a slight risk but taking preventive measures to avoid getting bitten is easy and reliable.

Travel Insurance

Generally, travel insurance is not mandatory. However, it's a good idea to look into insurance - in the event that you must cancel or interrupt your trip due to illness, or medical expenses occur whilst travelling and/or your luggage gets damaged, etc. Travel insurance for a year may be the best option if you are a frequent traveller. We are sure you will find the



best option for you to ensure a memorable Terra Nova trip. You might also want to check with your bank. Travel insurance is included in most credit cards nowadays.

Entry Requirements

The validity of your passport must remain valid for at least six months after the return date.

Visa

By providing us with your nationality (which is why we ask for it), we can correctly inform you about the documentation specifications you need for your Terra Nova experience. Upon your arrival, Zimbabwe is likely to grant a tourist visa, but please check with your Embassy or Department of Home Affairs to ensure what you need to obtain the visa in advance. It is generally necessary to have a minimum of two consecutive free pages for entry into each country you are travelling to, including the visa and stamp. If your itinerary includes more than one country, your passport must always have enough blank visa pages (not endorsement pages) for all required visas, excluding the country of departure and return. A passport with insufficient blank pages could prevent entry into a country. If a visa payment is needed at arrival, a cash payment will usually be requested. It is sometimes necessary to know the exact amount payable as change may not be readily available. Travellers' Cheques and Credit Cards are not usually accepted for this purpose. Be sure you check with the Department of Home Affairs before travelling to avoid any disappointments.

Accommodations

Accommodation Types

We have prepared an overview of the various Terra Nova accommodations for your convenience:

Frequently used accommodations:

- (Game/Safari) Lodge
- Tented Camp / Safari Camp
- Hotel
- Resort (mainly Mozambique and Tanzania)
- Campground (especially Namibia)

Lodge

A lodge is an accommodation facility designed and situated to enhance the sense of being close to nature. Various natural materials such as wood, stone and thatch are often used as building materials. Lodges usually provide outdoor experiences, such as guided hikes and game drives.



Hotel

In general, a hotel is the largest type of accommodation. Typically, there is a common reception area, and rooms often open straight into a passageway. There is usually a restaurant and other facilities on-site that are easily accessible to the public. In addition to the standard amenities, there may be room service and spa's available. Some hotels belong to larger hotel groups, and the experience may be similar across all the locations. The hotels we work with usually range from 3 to 5 stars.

Check-in / Check-out

Check-in at your Terra Nova accommodation typically takes place between 14h00 and 15h00. On the day of departure, check-out is generally between 10h00 and 11h00. In case of a late check-in, please notify the property. Lodges sometimes schedule shuttle services from the park entry into the Reserve. To avoid delays, please arrive at the meeting point at the time indicated on your travel documents.

Transportation & Luggage Restrictions

Transportation

Travel itineraries in Zimbabwe generally operate as so called “Fly-in Safaris”. Propeller driven light aircraft transfer you from camp to camp, where professional guides lead you through the parks and game activities. This is a form of luxury enjoyed by tourists visiting the country. However, this is partly due to these lodges being far apart with roads travelling between them either unsuitable for driving or having no roads at all.

Public transport in Zimbabwe is not exceptionally reliable or widespread, especially outside big cities.

Trains

The National Railways of Zimbabwe manages lines between the major destinations of Bulawayo, Victoria Falls, Labatse, Harare Chiredzi, Mutare, and Plumtree. Fares are cheap, with first, second, and economy classes available. They are not luxury trains as the facilities are quite basic. In most cases, the trains are sleepers, which provide clean sheets, pillows, and blankets for their passengers. Some areas of Zimbabwe have monkeys that climb on the roofs of trains, making train travel an excellent way to see the natural countryside.

Buses

Buses in the country can be classified into two types, express and local. Ticket sales for express services are pre-booked, and they run according to a set schedule. Local buses don't have a schedule and usually wait until they're full before leaving. Local buses can be found at markets and in the centre of major towns.



Taxis

Several metered taxi companies can be contacted whenever transportation is needed for inner-city travel, operating in Harare and Bulawayo. Minibuses are an excellent option for regional travel, though they can be crowded as drivers tend to cram as many passengers as possible before leaving.

Luggage Restrictions

The amount of luggage you can carry on an international flight depends on the airline. Typically, a flight's maximum allowance is listed in the booking confirmation. The standard amount is 20-23kg, excluding your hand luggage. National / domestic flights might have a slightly more restrictive luggage allowance, only permitting 20kg per person. This is important to keep in mind before your Terra Nova trip. Occasionally, charter flights allow only 15kg per person in soft bags, and luggage has to be added to the booking. Don't worry about this too much because we, at Terra Nova, always guarantee ticket fares that include at least one checked luggage bag per person. For all flights booked through Terra Nova, we will provide you with information regarding baggage allowance and other air travel-related matters.

Stay Connected

Electricity

In Zimbabwe, the power plugs and sockets are of type D and G. The standard voltage is 220V, and the standard frequency is 50Hz.

Internet Availability

Internet speed and connection type choices are often limited in remote areas. The majority of towns and popular tourist destinations have high-speed internet access. Those without mobile internet access will generally find at least one internet café in every town, along with free Wi-Fi at the majority of hotels, many coffee shops, restaurants, and some malls and shopping centres. WIFI are available at most Game Lodges. Econet is the primary service provider and data will run you \$2 for 50 MB. We advise you to opt for a sim card and data.

Important Telephone Numbers

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police Emergency: 999

General Emergency number: 112

Ambulance (road): 114



Terra Nova Contact

We have your back! Our Emergency / Service Phone is available 24/7, Monday through Sunday. Depending on who is on shift, we can also help you in Afrikaans, German, and/or Spanish. You can find all Terra Nova contact details in your Travel Documents. Our team is happy to assist you with this, and we will also provide all of the contact details for the services you have booked with your Travel Documents.

Rental Car

Driving in Zimbabwe

As mentioned before, Zimbabwe is a country where Fly-ins are generally recommended. However, there is always the option of doing a self-drive through the country. Almost every popular tourist destination in Zimbabwe is accessible by the excellent road system. However, the roads are mostly gravel, and they become tracks in the more remote areas, which requires caution when driving. The areas are not suitable for inexperienced drivers, so organized safaris or guided tours are recommended. Zimbabwe has just 17,400 km of tarred roads, but over 88,110 km of them are gravel. Zimbabweans drive on the left side of the road and there are high fines in Zimbabwe, and you should avoid speeding.

Speed limits (if not otherwise indicated)

Tarmac: 120km/h

Gravel: 80km/h

Towns: 60km/h

Car Rental Terms and Conditions

- A valid international driver's license is mandatory to drive and must be carried in your possession at all times.
- A renter must be 23 years of age or older.
- You cannot take the rented vehicle outside of Zimbabwe without prior permission from the rental company. A "Letter of Authorization" will be provided to the renter.

Integrity and transparency are essential to us at Terra Nova. We provide you with complete details of all included and/or excluded services without any hidden fees when you book with us.

For your rental car, we usually include - (unless otherwise stated):

- Vehicle of booked category
- All taxes and fees
- Contract fee

- Airport charges
- Unlimited kilometres
- Accident and theft insurance
- Tyre and windshield insurance
- Third-party liability insurance
- Additional driver
- GPS (if booked)
- Baby/child seat (if required)
- One-way fees (extra fee)
- Cross-border papers (if needed)
- Google Maps links to all destinations
- 24-hour emergency hotline

Excluded services are usually (unless otherwise stated):

- Petrol
- Security payment/deposit
- Surcharge for drivers under 23 years of age
- Luggage insurance
- Costs for overdue rental fees
- Delivery/collection of the rental car
- Cancellation/no-show fee
- Breakdown assistance (except for mechanical failure)
- Additional fees such as fines etc.

Travelling with Children

African destinations are great for children, such as Zimbabwe. Considering we are mothers, fathers, and sisters as well, we would not recommend taking children anywhere if we had even the slightest doubt. However, Zimbabwe is known as a high-end tourism destination as the main attraction in the country is its Game Lodges and National Parks. Due to the remote location of many of the Game Lodges, Fly-ins in small aircrafts is the recommended way to travel in Zimbabwe. This way of travel is more suited to couples or parents wanting to travel with their teenagers. Game Drives in open vehicles as well as some of the lodges are not always recommended for small children/kids.

Some advice while travelling with kids/teens:

- Aim to arrive at your destination before noon to allow your children to burn off their excess energy.
- Even in the middle of winter, it is warm enough to go swimming during the day.
- Our recommendations are to include fewer destinations, providing you with more time to enjoy the activities.
- If you are interested in conservation, consider places that have educational facilities, rehabilitation programs, or other conservation efforts.



Travel Responsible

How can I travel responsibly?

Be conscious of your carbon footprint:

This is where it all starts. Travel provides an estimated 8% of global carbon emissions each year, making it one of the worst contributors. Flying is the only way to get to Africa. So, understanding your carbon footprint and how to offset it is important when planning your travel. If you want to be more precise, you can use a free online carbon emissions calculator, such as Carbon Footprint. The easiest way to offset your flight is by contacting the airline directly when booking. Several airlines have carbon offset programs where travellers can pay an additional fee on top of the flight cost to support carbon offsets. These airlines include Qantas, KLM, Air Canada, and Austrian Airlines. Put yourself on the road to responsible travel by doing this.

Be Waterwise:

- You probably already know that plastic water bottles are a no-no. Instead, fill up your stainless steel or glass bottle whenever you can.
- Rather than throwing out hot water after a day of travelling, decant it somewhere valuable (like in a garden) or re-purpose it for something else (like washing your hands, clothes, etc.).
- Make sure you take a shower rather than a bath to save the environment. Be sure to turn it off while you lather up with soap, shampoo, or shave.
- Reduce the amount of toilet flushing. Depending on the type of toilet, a flush can use between 6 and 14 litres.
- As opposed to running the tap while brushing your teeth, use a cup instead.

Say no to plastic bags and straws:

We live in a culture where plastic is everywhere. It's convenient, fast, and inexpensive. Nonetheless, it also ranks among the most pressing environmental problems. Plastics kill millions of animals every year, so reducing how much we use is imperative. Use reusable bags while shopping, carry your water bottle rather than buying water, and avoid plastic straws.

Sunset /-rise

January:	05:30 – 18:40
February:	05:50 – 18:30
March:	06:00 – 18:10
April:	06:00 – 17:50
May:	06:10 – 17:55



June:	06:20 – 17:30
July:	06:25 – 17:35
August:	06:10 – 17:45
September:	05:55 – 17:50
October:	05:25 – 18:00
November:	05:10 – 18:10
December:	05:10 – 18:30

(Please note that National Park's self-drives times differ throughout the year depending on the season and the sun, as you need to be back at your lodge before sunset.)

Time Zone/ Time Difference

Central African Standard Time (CAST) is the time zone used by Zimbabwe and most Southern African countries. The zone is two hours ahead of GMT (GMT+02:00) and is the same as South African Standard Time.

Summer: From the first Sunday in September to the first Sunday in April – two hours in advance of GMT.

Winter: From the first Sunday in April to the first Sunday in September – one hour in advance of GMT.

Public Holidays

Robert Gabriel Mugabe National Youth Day	21. February
Independence Day of Zimbabwe	18. April
Workers' Day	2. May
Heroes' Day	8. August
Zimbabwe Defence Forces Day	9. August
National Unity Day of Zimbabwe	22. December

Taking pictures of local people

May I take pictures of local people?

- To take pictures of people in their environment, it is always best to have a local guide accompany you in order to communicate with the locals and overcome the barriers between you and them.
- Before taking someone's picture, be sure to ask. By doing so, you can avoid any conflict when taking photographs.

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- It is common for people to expect payment for their pictures. Among these people are those still wearing traditional clothing, such as the Himba and Herero.
 - Even though young children enjoy having their pictures taken, asking their guardians or parents first is always a good idea.
 - It's important to show someone your digital photo after you take it. Most people are not familiar with cameras but are amazed at what they can do.
 - Photographing men and women in uniform is illegal, except for situations such as public parades.
 - Most photo opportunities are arranged ahead of time on organized tours, allowing you to take photos at your leisure and allowing your guide to handle the formalities. Be sure to discuss this with your guide ahead of time.