

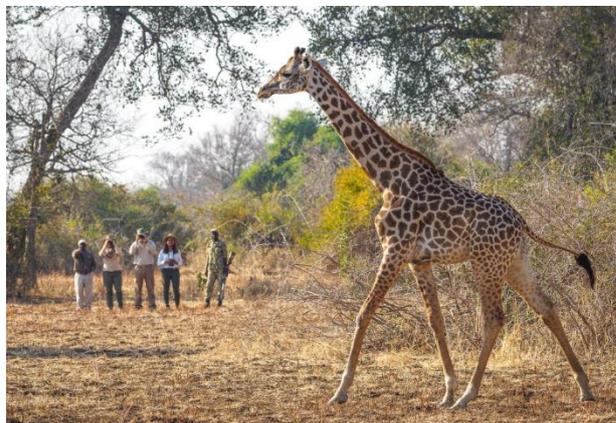
# Zambia on Foot - Ultimate Africa!

## Naturetrek Tour Itinerary

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### Outline itinerary

<b>Day 1</b>	Depart London.
<b>Day 2/3</b>	Nkwali Camp, South Luangwa.
<b>Day 4/8</b>	Mobile walking safari, South Luangwa.
<b>Day 9/10</b>	Nsefu Camp, South Luangwa.
<b>Day 11</b>	Depart Mfuwe.
<b>Day 12</b>	Arrive London.



**Departs**  
September.

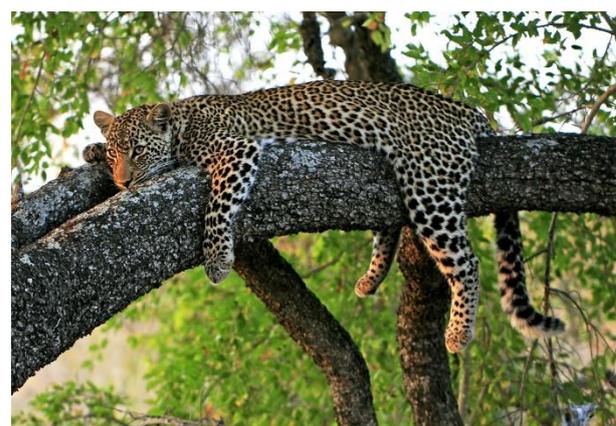
**Dates & prices**  
Visit [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk) (tour code ZMB05).

**Focus**  
Mammals, birds & other wildlife.

**Grading**  
Grade B (see Page 6 for additional information).

### Highlights

- Explore one of Africa's finest national parks both by vehicle and on foot
- Nine nights in the Luangwa Valley including a 5-night mobile camping walking safari
- Maximum group size of only six people
- Join night-time spotlighting drives in search of Leopard, genets, civets, owls and nightjars
- Elephant, Lion, Thornicroft's Giraffe and Hippo
- Abundant and colourful birdlife
- Enjoy colonies of the exquisite Southern Carmine Bee-eaters
- Led by expert local naturalist guides



From the top: Walking Safari, Southern Carmine Bee-eaters & Leopard



Naturetrek    Minglewood Barn    Wolf's Lane    Chawton    Alton    Hampshire    GU34 3HJ    UK

**T:** +44 (0)1962 733051

**E:** [info@naturetrek.co.uk](mailto:info@naturetrek.co.uk)

**W:** [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk)



## Introduction

The South Luangwa is Zambia's finest national park and is widely considered to be one of the greatest wildlife sanctuaries in all of Africa. Bounded by the Mchinga Escarpment to the west and the Luangwa River to the east, the park supports over 60 species of larger mammal and almost 500 species of birds, plus a concentration of other wildlife unsurpassed in southern Africa. The sweeping turns of the beautiful Luangwa River – full of Hippos and Nile Crocodiles – and its complex, ever-changing pans and oxbow lagoons, provide the backdrop for, amongst others, Lion, Leopard, African Elephant, Thornicroft's Giraffe, Puku and dazzling flocks of Southern Carmine Bee-eaters which descend on the valley en masse to breed.

The special feature of this holiday is the inclusion of a 5-night walking safari where the nights are spent under canvas, in three simple but comfortable private campsites in the very heart of the national park, well away from the tourist lodges. We will then explore the reserve on a series of walks which follow the course of the Mupamadzi River through a peaceful, wildlife-rich region of the valley. Here, we will be able to track and watch the birds and mammals on foot ...and are most unlikely to encounter any other tourists!

Our groups will be limited to a maximum of just six participants. Each will be led by a local naturalist safari guide and – when out on foot – an armed scout too. These guides are amongst Africa's very best, part of a tradition of excellence in local guiding established by the late Norman Carr, the renowned pioneer of Zambian walking safaris back in the 1950s. Our walking safari will be sandwiched between two nights at the start and end in a couple of small luxury camps/lodges overlooking the Luangwa River. We begin with two nights at the exclusive Nkwali Camp and end with two nights at Nsefu Camp which is located in the wonderful Nsefu sector of the national park, the focus of the BBC's 2025 'Kingdom' series.



## Itinerary

**NB.** Please note that the itinerary below offers our planned programme of excursions. However, adverse weather and other local considerations can necessitate some re-ordering of the programme during the course of the tour, though this will always be done to maximise best use of the time and weather conditions available.

## Day 1

## In Flight

We depart London's Heathrow Airport mid-evening on an Emirates Airlines overnight flight to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (please note that there are no direct flights into Zambia from the UK).

## Day 2 & 3

## Nkwali Camp, South Luangwa National Park

Following a change of aircraft in Dubai, we are due into Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, in the early afternoon from where we transfer to a one hour Proflight Zambia flight to Mfuwe, the small airport which services the South Luangwa National Park. On arrival in Mfuwe, we will be met by our local guides and transferred to Nkwali Camp (a journey of around an hour) for a two night stay.



The South Luangwa National Park comprises 9,050 square miles of unspoiled wilderness that makes up one of Africa's finest national parks. Herds of Elephant, Plains (Crawshay's) Zebra, Thornicroft's Giraffe, Puku and Impala dot the open savannahs whilst Bushbuck and troops of Olive Baboon tend to stay within the acacia scrub, or amongst the woodlands of Strangler Figs, Sausage Trees and Combretums. Groups of Hippo laze in the waters of the Luangwa River and careful searching along the river banks may yield a group or Greater Kudu, Common Waterbuck or perhaps a herd of Buffalo. With

such a large population of game, it is not surprising that the South Luangwa holds good numbers of predators such as Lion and Spotted Hyena and an increasing number of African Wild Dog.

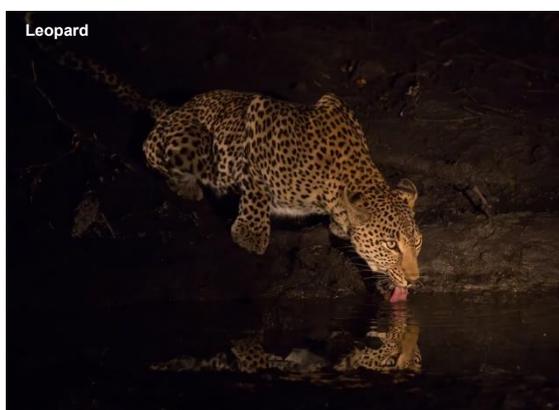
Birdlife is equally abundant in the South Luangwa National Park. Species include Saddlebill, Abdim's, Yellow-billed, Woolly-necked and Openbill Storks, Tawny, Wahlberg's and Martial Eagles, Gymnogene, Lizard Buzzard, Allen's Gallinule, Three-banded Courser, White-crowned Plover, the endemic Lillian's Lovebird, Grey and Purple-crested Louries, various cuckoos such as Jacobin, Striped, Black, and the beautiful Emerald Cuckoo, Woodland, Pied, Striped and Giant Kingfishers, White-fronted Bee-eater, Paradise and Broad-tailed Paradise Whydahs, Spotted-backed Weaver and many more. Southern Carmine Bee-eaters arrive to breed in late August and their riverbank colonies will be ablaze of colour in September, whilst around camp it is possible to find Collared Palm Thrush, White-browed Robin-chat and Terrestrial Bulbul.



Nkwali Camp is a small and exclusive bush camp overlooking the Luangwa River and located just outside the South Luangwa National Park but with easy and quick access into the reserve across the river. The camp features six twin or double bedded thatched chalets all of which overlook the river and have private open-air bathrooms. A thatched, open-plan bar and dining area, provides meals and service to an excellent standard. There is also a swimming pool and patio where guests can relax overlooking the Luangwa River.

Being set on the river's edge opposite the South Luangwa National Park, Nkwali Camp is an ideal place from which to begin our exploration. On our first full day in the park we will be awoken early and head into the reserve at first light with your guides on a game drive in search of the Luangwa Valley's abundant animals and birds. We are likely to return around 1030-1100am, after which we may retreat to the cooler and relaxing ambience of the lodge to enjoy 'brunch'. Group members may then choose to take a siesta, swim in the pool, or relax on the terrace of the lodge's thatched bar to enjoy the birds and game spread before them along the river. African Skimmers are occasionally seen from here, whilst Elephant, Bushbuck and Impala are common visitors to the waters edge in which Hippos and Nile Crocodiles wallow. Photographers and arm-chair birdwatchers will be in their element!

The afternoon drives depart around 4pm and are completed in the dark, when our guides will attempt to spotlight such nocturnal mammals as South African Crested Porcupine, Honey Badger, Large-spotted Genet, African Civet, White-tailed Mongoose, Lesser Bushbaby and, above all, Leopard, which is seen in South Luangwa more frequently than in any other park in Africa.



As the sun sets, we traditionally stop to enjoy 'sundowners', stretching our legs to absorb the sights and sounds of the bush at this busy and evocative time of day. Then, as darkness sets in, and the night-time sounds become more mysterious, we will embark on the second half of the drive using a spotlight to view the nocturnal species which would not normally be seen on a day-time safari. It is in these first hours of darkness that the cats are most active, patrolling their territories, looking for prey. With luck, we may have sighted a Leopard before we head back for dinner at 7.30 or 8.00 p.m., or perhaps a pride of hunting

Lions. Nocturnal birds may also be seen, including various nightjars, Spotted and Giant Eagle Owls and perhaps even the rare Pel's Fishing Owl.

## Day 4

## Walking Safari, overnight Mobile Camp No. 1

After two nights at Nkwali Camp, we will now drive for around 90 kilometres to the Mupamadzi River deep in the heart of national park to begin our 5-night walking safari. We are due to arrive at camp around midday/early afternoon and lunch will be served shortly afterwards. Our friendly camp staff would have set up camp ready for our arrival with comfortable and well-equipped walk-in Meru-style tents. The shower will be set up under the shade of a nearby tree along with a long-drop bush toilet (with a wooden throne!). Further details of the mobile camp can be found on page 7 of this itinerary.



After a relax and siesta, our safari guide will introduce us to the armed escort scout who will accompany us on our first real walk through the bush. The guides and scout will take time to point out the tracks and signs that they use to interpret the different habitats that we are walking through; this first excursion being a taster for what is to come during the rest of our holiday. At dusk we will return to camp for a sundowner and dinner in the open under the fabulous panorama of the night sky, unpolluted by light and with the Milky Way stretching overhead.

## Day 5 & 6

## Walking Safari, overnight Mobile Camp No. 2

When dawn breaks our guides will wake us with a friendly call and a cup of tea or coffee and will then interpret the calls and sounds that punctuated the darkness overnight. In the cool of the early morning hours, we will then head out together on foot and perhaps pick up the fresh tracks of a pride of Lions or investigate the alarm calls of the local troop of Olive Baboons. This is no nature trail, this is the real thing, we'll be tracking big game through the African bush, on foot!

Our walk will follow the course of the Mupamadzi River, a major tributary of the Luangwa. This is a remote and wild region of the park where the game is more wary of us humans than in the busier areas of the reserve near Mfuwe. Even so, there will be lots to see on our walks, from tiny antlions to colourful bee-eaters and stately Thornicroft's Giraffe. Elephant, Bushbuck, Cape Buffalo, Crawshay's Zebra, Puka and Greater Kudu are also possible. Your guides will point out the birds and interpret the tracks and signs we come across along the way. Overhead soar Tawny, Steppe, Martial and Wahlberg's Eagles, along with a wide variety of smaller birds of prey. Lilac-breasted Rollers and White-fronted Bee-eaters add a splash of colour to the scene, whilst along the river's edge we will be looking for waders and other waterbirds.

Whilst we are out walking, our camp staff will break camp, move it to our next site and have it all erected again for our arrival for lunch. We will be based here for the following two nights. The walks from camp to camp are usually around 10 kilometers in length, taken at a leisurely pace with the aim of arriving at the new camp by lunchtime.



Following lunch and a few restful hours, we will head out again on foot later in the afternoon, returning to camp once again for a sundowner and dinner. Watching the sun go down beside the log fire, and then taking dinner in the world's best dining room – the bush! – will be amongst the many highlights of this holiday.

The following day we will enjoy morning and afternoon walks into the bush once again with our safari guide and game scout returning to 'Camp Number No. 2' for lunch and dinner.

## Day 7 & 8

## Walking Safari, overnight Mobile Camp No. 3



As we walk further along the Mupamadzi River this morning, our camp staff will break camp once again and move it to our last campsite for our final couple of nights in the bush. Throughout our time on foot, we must keep an eye open for Lions, which like to bask in the early morning sun in the open sandy areas along the banks of the river. Vultures in the air may indicate that the pride have made a kill overnight! We are sure to see more Elephants, Thornicroft's Giraffe, Crawshay's Zebra, Puku, Impala, Blue Wildebeest, Eland and others on our walks, along with numerous birds and plenty of other wildlife. If very

fortunate, we may bump into a pack of African Wild Dogs, although this rare and mobile canid is more likely to be seen on our vehicular safaris at the start and end of the safari.

## Day 9 & 10

## Nsefu Camp

Although our walking safari has come to an end, our holiday has not, for we now transfer to Nsefu Camp for a 2-night stay, a journey of four to five hours, that doubles up once again as an extended game drive. Nsefu Camp sits on a sweeping bend of the Luangwa River and was the first game camp in Zambia dating to the early 1950s. The Nsefu Sector of the park was recognised even then as a fabulous area for wildlife and it still is today. Indeed, the BBC's 2025 'Kingdom' series which followed the trials and tribulations of the park's Lions, Wild Dogs, Hyenas and Leopards was set here. Nsefu Camp is one of only two camps within this part of the national park and features six very comfortable en suite chalets positioned along the edge of the Luangwa River. Each room has a clear view of the river, through large windows and from its spacious wooden veranda.

We will enjoy our final few safaris from Nsefu Camp in their open vehicles in search of some of the animals and birds we may have missed earlier in the holiday and hoping, in particular, to encounter the pack of African Wild Dogs that live in the region.



Nsefu Camp



Nsefu Camp Chalet



Nsefu Camp Chalet

The afternoon drives extend into night drives once again, where we hope to encounter Leopard as well as a range of other nocturnal mammals and birds. We have two nights to enjoy the comforts of Nsefu Camp along with its outstanding wildlife.

## Day 11

## Depart Lusaka

We will have time for one final game drive this morning before making the one hour 30-minute drive out of the park and back to Mfuwe airport where we must sadly leave our guides and take a late afternoon Proflight Zambia flight back to Lusaka. On arrival we will transfer to an Emirates Airlines return flight to London, via Dubai.

## Day 12

## Arrive London

We are due to arrive back into London's Heathrow Airport in the early afternoon.

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## Grading

Grade B – Although this holiday will start and end with morning and afternoon safari drives, its focus is on walking safaris, primarily around and between the three different mobile camps in which we will be staying. The terrain is mostly flat or gently undulating and relatively easy-going (often sandy underfoot), although after a couple of hours walking it does tend to get hot. We will, though, walk at a gentle pace, stopping regularly to look at the birds and animals, and their tracks, along the way. Walks between campsites take place in the mornings, cover around 10 kilometres and take four hours or so to complete. We will leave after breakfast and aim to arrive at camp for lunch.

It is important that those wishing to join this trip should have at least an 'average' level of fitness and have no difficulty in walking. It is a general rule of thumb that for walking safaris participants should also be able to run for 50 meters. It is important to note, however, that this is not because you will be expected to run away from charging Elephants or grumpy Lions, it is just another way of indicating the level of fitness required to get the most out of this holiday.

## Weather

September sits within Zambia's dry season and so dry and sunny weather is expected with fair weather cloud bubbling up during the afternoon. Whilst we do not expect any rain, Southern Africa's climate is less predictable than it used to be and so a shower or two is not out of the question. We can expect midday temperatures to climb into the mid-30s°C (occasionally higher), but it will be cooler in the early morning and late afternoon when we will be enjoying most of our game viewing activities. The nights and early mornings can be a little chilly on occasion so a fleece or light sweater would be useful. The temperature gets progressively hotter through September and October leading up to the rains in November.

## Food & accommodation

For the first two nights and last two nights in the Luangwa Valley, we will be staying in small and exclusive lodges, both of which feature very comfortable two-person chalets/rooms with private facilities.

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For our 5-night walking safari we will be based in three mobile wilderness camps which will be set up and taken down by our team of friendly camp staff. The tents are of the Meru style and are well equipped with a camp bed and bedding. They do not have a private toilet and shower. The shower/s will be set up under the shade of a nearby tree, along with long-drop bush toilet/s (with a wooden throne!).



This is real wilderness camping, well away from the tourist lodges and other visitors. As such, the campsite is simple in nature but comfortable. Please be aware that whilst battery charging facilities will be available at the lodges at the start and end of the tour, there are no charging facilities whilst on the mobile camping part of the holiday and no WIFI or mobile phone coverage either.



The cost of all meals and accommodation are included in the price of this holiday with the exception of any necessary meals whilst travelling from London to Mfuwe and back.

### Extra expenses

The cost of the holiday includes economy class flights from London, accommodation on a full board basis whilst on safari, park fees and all game drives/walks. Tips and premium drinks are excluded from the cost of the safari as are any necessary meals on your journey to and from Mfuwe and all items of a personal nature.

## Transport

Safari vehicles are open-top and four-wheel drive. They are designed with two or three stepped rows of seats and are open (apart from a sunshade) and are great for photography.



## Group size & Tour Leaders

The maximum group size on this tour will be six people (plus safari guides/scouts). The tour will be led by an excellent team of local naturalist safari guides. Please note that this tour is not accompanied by a UK tour leader.

## Entry requirements for Zambia

British nationals visiting Zambia for less than 90 days do not need to purchase a visa in advance and can now obtain a free one on arrival into Lusaka.

## Luggage Restrictions

Please note that the internal Proflight Zambia flights between Lusaka and Mfuwe have a strict weight limit of 23kg of luggage per person plus 5kg hand baggage. Please refer to Proflight Zambia's website at [www.proflight-zambia.com](http://www.proflight-zambia.com) for additional information on baggage restrictions and the cost of purchasing additional weight.

Additional information on how to safely transport heavy photographic equipment on the flight from Lusaka to Mfuwe is contained within our pre-departure notes, which are sent to all group members after booking.

## Your safety & security

You have chosen to travel to Zambia. Risks to your safety and security are an unavoidable aspect of all travel and the best current advice on such risks is provided for you by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. In order to assess and protect against any risks in your chosen destination, it is essential that you refer to the Foreign Office website: [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/zambia](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/zambia) or telephone 0870 6060290 prior to travel.

## How to book your place

In order to book a place on this holiday, you will need to read the Naturetrek terms and conditions in the back of our brochure or on our website, and then book either online at [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk), by calling us on 01962 733051, or by completing and returning the booking form in the brochure together with a deposit of 20% of the holiday cost. If you do not have a copy of this brochure, please call us on 01962 733051.