

The Warm Heart of Africa! Malawi may be one of Africa's smallest countries but when it comes to exploration and adventure, it has tremendous amounts to offer; from grasslands and forests, mountaintops, unspoilt wildlife parks to Africa's third largest and most beautiful Lake! Situated on the Great Rift Valley, Malawi is dominated by Lake Malawi, a magnificent body of water, 365 miles long and 52 miles wide (hence sometimes referred to as the calendar lake!). It's teeming with life including over 400 species of cichlid, a lot of which are endemic to it.

The wildlife parks in Malawi are picturesque as well as diverse in game. Also, unlike other African parks these have a very exclusive feel to them with only a few lodges operating in each. Areas such as Majete Wildlife Reserve & Liwonde National Park are virtually undiscovered by tourists thus visiting feels more like an expedition, making for unique and exciting safaris.

International airlines

It's easy to reach us out here in Malawi and continues to get better.

- Ethiopian Airlines operates into both Lilongwe and Blantyre.
- Kenya Airways also operates into both Lilongwe and Blantyre.
- South African Airways operates direct flights from Johannesburg to Blantyre and Lilongwe.

Visa Information

All travellers must be in possession of a valid passport when entering and leaving the country. Please do check with [Department of Immigration Malawi](#) if you require a visa for entry. All nationals that **require visa** to enter Malawi **must apply [online](#)** for an e-visa. This can be verified on this [link](#).

When applying for the visa you will need to submit an invitation letter which we are happy to assist with! We would need the following information for the letter:

- Name of Traveller
- Date of Birth
- Passport Number
- Date of issue
- Date of expiry
- Nationality

Currently the visa fees available at the ports of entry are as follows:

Transit (valid for 7 days) - US\$50

Single entry (valid for 3 months) - US\$75

Multiple entry (valid for 6 months) - US\$150

Multiple entry (valid for 12 months) - US\$250

Airport Tax

Most airlines now include airport taxes in the tickets. But for charter flights these may still be payable and where it is applicable you will be notified at the time of booking.

Medical

All visitors should be medically insured.

Malaria – we recommend that visitors to Malawi take malaria prophylactics.

Bilharzia can be found in certain areas of Lake Malawi. We have the vicinity of Pumulani tested on a regular basis and all the tests have been clear.

Tetanus, polio, typhoid, and the hepatitis vaccinations are recommended. Yellow fever immunization is required only by visitors entering Malawi from a yellow fever zone.

Please consult your regular doctor or travel clinic in your country for up-to-date information. It is advisable to know your blood group type in case of emergency.

Insurance

We ask that full insurance is put in place at point of confirmation. We highly recommend that every guest has insurance that covers the following as a minimum:

- Cancellation and curtailment
- Medical costs (including full hospital costs should it be needed)
- Personal accident or death
- Emergency evacuation from the point of evacuation to the nearest best hospital and then back to the guest's hometown. Family or traveling partner should also be covered for accompanying an evacuation.

We cannot emphasize how important it is to be fully covered. Private hospitals in Africa will not accept a patient until full medical insurance has been established.

Communication

In most major towns you will be able to use your phone – please do check roaming options with your local service providers. However, most camps and lodges are in remote areas with limited or no network coverage at all.

Wi-Fi is not available in most camps and lodges outside of the major towns. When available, it is usually very slow or limited – may not be possible to upload your pictures and videos.

All camps and lodges will however have various modes of communication available to them in cases of emergencies, such as satellite phones.

Money

Travellers' cheques and cash (currencies that are widely & readily accepted include the US Dollar, the Euro, the Pound Sterling, and the South African Rand) are accepted. US dollar bills – we only accept the new notes with large heads as any with small heads are not accepted in Malawi.

The local currency (Malawi Kwacha) can be obtained at the airports - ATMs (Visa only) or Banks/Bureaux de Change.

Visa credit cards are becoming more widely accepted but not in remote areas and should not be relied on except in major towns.

What to Bring

You should always travel with soft bags not hard suitcases (not only for the smaller aircraft but also to fit into vehicles). DO NOT exceed the limit of 15 kg for hold luggage and 5kg for hand luggage.

Due to the size of the aircrafts used, passengers weighing over 100kgs will need to notify Robin Pope Safaris of their actual weight so this can be taken into consideration. Additional fees may apply to these passengers.

In the recent years we have had more and more guests arriving without their luggage. Unfortunately, with new security at airports hand luggage is being restricted but where possible we recommend that you travel with anything essential (medication, space glasses), and if possible, a change of clothes.

List of items to bring:

- A hat, sunglasses, high strength sunscreen, moisturizer, lip salve, strong insect repellent, antihistamine cream and tablets should always be carried.
- Clothes - all properties have a daily laundry service so do not bring too many. Here is a good guide:
 - 3 sets bush coloured safari outfits (long/shorts/shirts) i.e. green/brown/dark khaki (not white, cream or bright colours - especially for walking).

- 2 set casual evening clothes (long trousers & shirts and socks to reduce insect bites).
- 1 light weight sweater. Warm jacket in winter (June/July/early Aug).
- Light rain gear for the wet months (November - April).
- A few camps do have pools so bring a costume with you.
- A good pair of covered shoes for walking – should you be on a walking safari; we highly recommend walking boots that support the ankle. Water resistant walking shoes are also handy during the wet season.
- Open shoes or sandal type shoes (with firm grip for Victoria Falls Tour) for warmer days.
- **Note:** Out of respect for local culture, undergarments will not be washed even where laundry is available.
- Binoculars – one pair per person is a must
- Torch
- Glasses - if you wear prescription glasses bring a spare pair. If you wear contact lenses bring a pair of glasses as well since dust can be a problem.
- Camera equipment: a telephoto lens (200/300mm). Flash for night photography. Camera cleaning equipment and a good dust/waterproof bag. Videos - bring spare batteries.

Some handy tips for Packing

- Travel bags: soft bags are preferable - duffel bag, hiking pack or sports bag – as they are more ideal for the air transfers and safari vehicles. Hard suitcases can often be difficult to fit into the safari vehicles and some light aircrafts will not actually take them onboard.
- A smaller bag to put your important items such as travel documents, money, camera, medication is highly recommended and suggest you always keep it on you.
- We recommend you keep luxury items to the bare minimum – expensive jewellery, bulky toiletries, make up. Some camps and lodges have hair dryers so do check if you need to carry your own.
- Separating your money into different pockets and carry-on items is also worth doing in case something happens to one of these items.

Community Support Supplies

Should you have extra space in your luggage, please use it to provide supplies to communities you visit. You can make a big impact on the lives of children in Malawi. Anything from books and stationery to clothes and toys. Cash donations are also accepted. You are welcome to contact us for updated 'wish lists' for the projects we support.

Climate

January - March

The "Emerald Season" is one of regrowth, replenishment, and rebirth. The birds are breeding and its peak birth season of many animals. The rainfall is at its highest during these months, but it mostly falls at night.

April and May

Dry with occasional storms, but the skies are clear and it's warm. The grass is now tall and green, the skies are clear and the blue, the new generation of birds have left the nests and the migrants start to leave.

June – August

Our winter, there are occasional strong winds, and the nights are cool and the days warm.

This is now the "dry season" and is also our winter. The grass dries up and dies back, this creates easier opportunities for game sightings when on safari.

September

The temperatures rise and the air becomes hazy.

October and November

Hot and often humid and start of the rainfall. New growth starts - and there are new-borns everywhere towards the end of October.

December

The temperatures are still high but can be cooled down by early rains. The onset of the rains can also bring a deluge of flying ants and other insects (sometimes in big proportions, but normally lasting a few hours). With the insects come the cooler temperatures but also the humidity.

Safety

Africa's wild animals are unpredictable and potentially dangerous. Photographic safari activities and staying in any safari camp place visitors near wild animals. It is therefore an inherent risk to those persons wishing to undertake these activities. Whilst every care is taken by Robin Pope Safaris and its personnel to minimise exposure to risk, Robin Pope Safaris Ltd bears no responsibility whatsoever for any loss, injury, illness, death, delays, cancellation of flights or change of itinerary and retains the right to alter, amend or cancel any part of a safari with just reason.

Voltage

Pumulani is supplied by mains electricity (with backup generator) – 220V, three square pin UK plugs.

Mkulumadzi and Kuthengo Camp are run off solar power with back-up generator. The plugs (three square pin) here may only be used for lamps and charging equipment for mobile phones or cameras. Hairdryers cannot be used. Hot water is delivered in the early mornings for tea / coffee.

Dietary requirements

Please let us know any food allergies or any other special dietary requirements well in advance so the camp /lodge can accommodate you.

Nut Allergies: While our kitchen is fully capable of catering for most dietary requests, we regrettably are unable to cater for people with severe nut allergies as we cannot guarantee a completely nut free environment.

Photography

Please be sensitive when photographing local people and their villages. Ask the guide or the villagers first. Be careful when photographing public buildings and persons in uniform - again, ask first.

Tipping

Is not expected but always enthusiastically received if you are happy with the service. Please always give tips for the camp/lodge staff to the management to be shared out and please tip your guides individually. When asked 'how much' we say for camp/lodge staff from US\$5 per person per night and for guides the same again.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In case you need to get hold of us in case of an emergency, you can contact us as follows:

Munyama Mudaala, Reservations Manager:

T: +260 95 709 0441

E: info@robinpopesafaris.net

Malawi Office:

T: +265 99 350 4600

The above will have contact with the camps and lodges as well in the case of family needing to reach you.