



WWF INSIDER JOURNEYS

# Exploring Africa's KAZA Conservation Frontier



## TRIP ITINERARY

A Safari to Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Botswana with Bas Huijbregts,  
WWF's African Species Director, Wildlife Conservation Program

September 22–October 2, 2024

In 2011, five African countries—Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe—signed a treaty to create the world’s largest transboundary conservation area. About the size of California and the largest conservation area in the world, the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA) is a contiguous landscape—that hinges on connectivity across boundaries—where wildlife conservation drives sustainable economic development. WWF’s work in KAZA helps people and wildlife coexist by working with government, communities,



and other partners to identify, conserve, and secure the corridors as much as possible to allow elephants and other species to move freely across KAZA.



Join WWF’s Bas Huijbregts for an incredible safari into the heart of our efforts as we visit three vital countries for the success of KAZA. By 4x4 safari vehicles, scenic flights, and aboard the Zimbabwean Dream, an elegant new vessel built

for African waters, explore firsthand how WWF is working with communities, NGOs, governments, and the private sector on the ground to protect the region’s iconic wildlife and their habitat, and support the socioeconomic well-being of local communities. Our grand adventure visits four diverse national parks including Zimbabwe’s famed Hwange and Botswana’s Chobe, both celebrated wildlife havens along important rivers that sustain a profusion of species, and concludes in spectacular Victoria Falls.

## ITINERARY AT A GLANCE 11 Days

Day	Date	Location	Accommodation
1	September 22	Kasane, Botswana / Impalila Island, Namibia	Kaza Safari Lodge
2&3	September 23	Chobe River / Chobe National Park	Kaza Safari Lodge
4	September 24	Chobe / Kasane / Lake Kariba—Board <i>Zimbabwean Dream</i>	Zimbabwean Dream
5&6	September 25	Exploring Lake Kariba / Matusadona National Park	Zimbabwean Dream
7-9	September 26&27	Kariba / Hwange National Park	Davison’s Camp
10	October 1	Hwange / Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls Hotel
11	October 2	Victoria Falls / Depart	

## ITINERARY IN DETAIL

### Day 1, September 22: Kasane, Botswana / Impalila Island, Namibia

Upon arrival in Kasane, Botswana, transfer by road and boat just over the Namibian border to our recently-opened lodge on Impalila Island. Tucked away from the larger accommodations that border Chobe National Park, our intimate lodge offers a more secluded location and excellent access to the park and Chobe River for both land- and water-based exploration. This evening, gather with our fellow travelers for a welcome dinner as our WWF Expert and Expedition Leader shares an overview of the safari adventures to come.

*Overnight Kaza Safari Lodge (D)*

### Day 2&3, September 23&24: Exploring the Chobe River / Chobe National Park

With two full days in the renowned Chobe region, we'll have ample time to explore it from a variety of perspectives. Meet local villagers who live on Impalila Island and learn about their culture. Cruise the Chobe River's channels and inlets by motorboat as we search for



hippos, crocodiles, and myriad bird species that frequent this area. Search for big game on an overland safari in Chobe National Park. The river flowing through the park is a lifeline for bountiful wildlife, including Africa's largest elephant population—as many as 70,000 of Botswana's 130,000 elephants live within the park bounds. We also seek out buffalo, lions, leopards, and more on exhilarating safari drives. Return in the evenings to our comfortable island retreat, mulling the day's wonders around a campfire under a starry sky.

*Overnight Kaza Safari Lodge (B, L, D)*



## Day 4, September 25: Chobe / Kasane / Lake Kariba— Board *Zimbabwean Dream*

Return to Kasane this morning and fly on to Kariba where we board our boutique river-boat *Zimbabwean Dream*. This deluxe three-deck vessel, ideal for cruising the vast expanse of Lake Kariba, is our floating safari base for the next three days. The lake was created when the Zambezi River was dammed in the late 1950s, and it is the largest manmade body of water in the world, more than 140 miles long and 25 miles across at its widest point. Today, the dam provides electricity for 70% of Zimbabwe's residents, and the resulting lake is a haven for a wide array of waterbirds and wildlife along the border of Zimbabwe and Zambia. Lake Kariba's size makes it feel more like an inland sea, and given how few visitors this region sees, we're assured a serene experience. On board we find a relaxing rhythm, typically making two excursions per day, leaving the ship each morning and afternoon for wildlife-focused activities via smaller boats and safari vehicles.

*Overnight Zimbabwean Dream* (B, L, D)



## Day 5&6, September 26&27: Exploring Lake Kariba / Matusadona National Park



The unusual landscapes of Lake Kariba provide diverse contexts for exploration. In some places, drowned trees still jut from the water's calm surface. Via covered pontoon boat, cruise close to the shoreline and reed-fringed backwaters that shelter a variety of animals and birds. Hippos congregate along the shoreline, subtly revealing their presence as their ears and eyes peek above the water's surface. And we often see crocodiles hauled out on the lake's edge.



Along the way, explore Matusadona National Park, where we disembark for a land safari. Bordered by the Sanyati and Ume rivers, the park's 540 square miles of untouched terrain is home to elephants, Cape buffalo, impala, waterbuck, side-striped jackal, and more. We'll also look for lions—though elusive, two prides inhabit the park, about 40 in all—and they are adept hunters, even killing crocodiles on occasion. We're sure to see lots of birds, with frequent sightings of Egyptian goose, marabou stork, saddle-billed stork, Goliath heron, African skimmer, and the coveted African fish eagle. Some of the park's wildlife may be descendants of the more than 6,000 animals rescued during Operation Noah, following the completion of the Kariba Dam in 1959. As the water level rose, many creatures struggled to survive on the ground that was gradually becoming submerged. A team of intrepid rangers moved large

mammals, big cats, impala herds, and more to safety into Matusadona, transporting many on wooden rafts.



After each full day of discovery, return to the ship to watch the sun set blood-red over the water, dine on gourmet cuisine including freshly caught bream and tilapia from the lake, and head up to the sundeck after dark to watch the sparkling stars in the black night sky.

*Overnight Zimbabwean Dream (B, L, D)*

## Day 7-9, September 28-30: Kariba / Hwange National Park

Disembark this morning and fly to Hwange National Park. From Davison's Camp, we have exclusive proximity to outstanding wildlife viewing. Bordering the Kalahari Desert on Zimbabwe's western edge, Hwange is the country's largest and most renowned national park. Its 5,600 square miles are comprised mostly of desert sandveld with teak and mopane

woodlands and dry acacia scrub interspersed with salt pans, grasslands, and granite outcrops. The varied habitat is home to huge herds of elephants and buffalo, plus a vital predator population including lions, leopards, and cheetahs. Other game frequently on view include zebras, giraffes, sables, roans, blue wildebeest, and impala. We also keep an eye out for endangered gemsbok, brown hyena, and African wild dog. The variety of birdlife is among the best in Africa, with more than 400 species. While our focus is game drives, a viewing platform at camp offers relaxed afternoon wildlife viewing at close range.

Bush walks with renowned guides are a highlight, as safety permits.

*Overnight Davison's Camp (B, L, D)*



## Day 10, October 1: Hwange / Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Leave the plains of Hwange behind as we fly by light aircraft to Victoria Falls and transfer to the Victoria Falls Hotel. This 5-star colonial landmark offers the same splendid panorama and genteel Edwardian ambience that made it a legend when it opened in 1904. This afternoon, join our Expedition Leader for a privately guided tour of Victoria Falls National Park.





The world's largest curtain of falling water spans more than a mile and plummets 350 feet into the Zambezi Gorge, which divides Zimbabwe from Zambia. View the falls from varying vantage points via the network of trails along the rim as we walk through the rain forest microclimate created by the profuse spray.

*Overnight Victoria Falls Hotel (B, L, D)*

## Day 11, October 2: Victoria Falls / Depart

Our safari comes to a close today. After breakfast, there's time for a walk around the lush grounds of our historic hotel before a transfer to the Victoria Falls airport to meet departing flights later this morning.

*(B)*

*Please note: The itinerary provided is meant as a guideline and is subject to change without notice. On rare occasions, it may be necessary to deviate from our regular itinerary for reasons beyond our control. In these instances, we will provide the best available alternative.*

*Should you wish to extend your safari elsewhere in Africa, our travel partners, Natural Habitat Adventures, would be happy to explore options with you. Please discuss custom extensions at the time of booking.*

# Meet Our Expert



## Bas Huijbregts, WWF African Species Director, Wildlife Conservation Program

Bas leads WWF's work on wildlife conservation in Africa, focusing primarily on elephants, great apes, and rhinos. The most exciting part of protecting these charismatic, flagship species is that by protecting those, the protected areas and wider ecosystems on which they depend are also protected. His work entails landscape planning, protected area management, law enforcement, community-based natural resource management, and the monitoring of species populations over time and space. Given the current poaching crisis on the

continent, a particular focus is given to reinforcing protection efforts in WWF's priority landscapes and fighting wildlife crime.

Bas first started working in Africa in 1996 doing large mammal and socio-economic baseline surveys. These surveys laid the foundation for the creation of the 3,700 sq. mile Minkebe National Park, one of the last strongholds for the African forest elephant.

From there, Bas led the Gamba program along the coast of Gabon, home to the world's most important nesting site for leatherback turtles, surfing hippos and elephants on the beach, followed by positions as conservation director for Gabon and for the Central Africa region. Before joining his wife in the US in 2014, he led the joint WWF/TRAFFIC Central Africa wildlife crime initiative based out of Yaounde, Cameroon.

## What to Expect and Physical Requirements

This trip is considered easy to moderate. To participate in this trip, you must be able to walk unassisted at a steady pace for at least one mile over uneven terrain, climb steps to get into and out of our raised safari vehicles, and be able to tolerate daily outdoor excursions that may last 4-5 hours or even a full day at a time, sometimes in hot, windy and/or dusty conditions. Wildlife drives pose a particular type of physical demand on the body, as they require long hours of sitting and take place over terrain that is often very rough and bumpy, including dirt roads with many ruts and potholes. Travelers with back or neck problems, or other health issues that could be exacerbated by such conditions, should take this into consideration. While any walking safaris are considered optional, travelers must be able to walk unassisted to and from the vehicle to our camp accommodations, sometimes walking over uneven ground or on boardwalks. Days spent on safari are often long, as mornings typically start before daybreak and evening meals are served after sundown. Safari accommodations and vehicles are not climate-controlled and, depending on the season, temperatures can range from quite cold to extremely hot, so it is critical that travelers come prepared.



# Accommodations



## Kaza Safari Lodge

Recently refurbished in 2022, KAZA Safari Lodge sits near the point where four countries—Namibia, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe—come together, close to the confluence of the Chobe and Zambezi rivers in Southern Africa. Located on Namibia’s Caprivi Strip adjacent to Botswana’s Chobe National Park, the lodge is shaded beneath a 700-year-old baobab tree on the site where explorer David Livingstone reputedly camped.

Eight individual thatched chalets face the river, with expansive views from private decks. All have en suite bathrooms with showers and hair dryers, tea and coffee-making facilities, overhead ceiling fan, safe and mini bar. Wi-Fi is available in the common lounge.

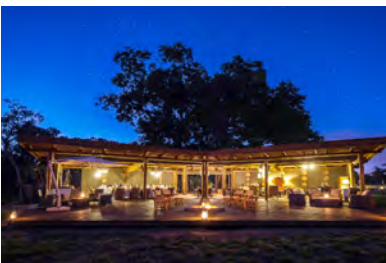
The main area is a large mukwa wood-and-thatch structure, built around a pair of ancient baobabs. The bar and lounge feature comfortable sofas and armchairs, and a small library and curio shop are also available. Meals are served on the open-air deck overlooking the Zambezi River where hippos often provide entertainment. An outdoor swimming pool offers refreshment, and guests will also enjoy the bird-viewing platform overlooking the Zambezi floodplain.



## Zimbabwean Dream

The elegant new Zimbabwean Dream, sister ship to the famous African Dream, offers just 16 guests the optimal way to explore vast Lake Kariba and its wild surroundings. The 108-foot ship has two decks plus a topside sundeck, with panoramic windows throughout so travelers never miss a minute of the passing view. Modernist decor is streamlined and understated, in tranquil tones of gray and cream with warm orange accents.

The upper deck, where the public spaces are located, is virtually surrounded by floor-to-ceiling glass windows. The casual yet stylish restaurant located aft features creative international cuisine served in a bright, airy setting, while the forward lounge bar, designed with contemporary flair, invites relaxing on sectional sofas positioned for maximum viewing. But the best views are undoubtedly from the outside decks. The sundeck on top offers a 360-degree panorama of the lake, and the birds and wildlife that inhabit its lush shorelines, while the upper deck features a shaded aft deck area and a Jacuzzi plunge pool with a forward-facing 270-degree view over the bow.



## Davison's Camp

One of few camps inside the boundaries of Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe's premier wildlife destination, Davison's Camp offers a classic bush safari camp experience. The camp is located on the private Link-washa Concession, one of the most prolific wildlife areas within the national park that surrounds it. With more than 100 mammal species, Hwange has some of the highest mammal diversity of any national park.

Davison's is the perfect setting for safari-goers seeking vintage ambience coupled with all the necessary comforts for modern-day travelers. The camp has eight canvas double tents and one family tent, with interiors defined by natural materials that blend artfully with the bush environs—sisal, wicker and wood, and furnishings in a palette of neutral earth tones.

The main lounge, bar, dining area and open campfire boma all overlook a busy waterhole where game frequently comes to drink, including large herds of elephant and buffalo, and rare sable antelope. Cushioned sofas and deep leather chairs provide comfortable seating in the lounge. Meals are served on the open-air deck or around the large outdoor campfire area. Reclining lounge chairs invite relaxing on the deck or around the pool, with a constant parade of wildlife on display for entertainment.



## Victoria Falls Hotel

Perched above the Zambezi Gorge in full view of the falls, this 5-star colonial landmark hotel offers the same splendid panorama and genteel Edwardian ambience that made it a legend when it opened in 1904. Since then it has played host to royalty, international and local statesmen and global celebrities, among its many guests.

The hotel is situated on a sprawling expanse of manicured lawn surrounded by tropical gardens and lies within Victoria Falls National Park. Its incomparable setting and refined elegance have earned it worldwide acclaim for over a century, epitomizing the grace and romance of a classic era of African travel.

# About WWF Insider Journeys

WWF Insider Journeys is a special conservation travel program for our closest supporters to see first-hand the positive impact World Wildlife Fund is making. Each of these curated journeys is accompanied by WWF experts and offers exclusive opportunities to discover the wildlife and ecosystems we protect; meet community members whose lives are being improved because of our work; and immerse yourself in the worlds of our staff and partners on the ground. Come explore the best of the natural world alongside other WWF supporters and see how together we are making a difference for our planet.

## About Our Travel Partner



This journey is being arranged by Natural Habitat Adventures of Boulder, Colorado. For more than a decade, WWF has partnered with Nat Hab to take travelers to view nature's greatest sights. WWF selected Natural Habitat as its partner because of its long-standing commitment to conservation and the exceptional quality of its adventures.

## Reservation Information & Trip Details

For reservations and additional information, please contact Aly Jacobsen at Natural Habitat Adventures (888) 993-8687 or [alyj@nathab.com](mailto:alyj@nathab.com).

<b>DATES:</b>	September 22 – October 2, 2024
<b>LAND COST:</b>	\$16,995 - \$17,395 per person in double occupancy (+internal air) Internal air cost: \$2,267 Single supplement: \$6280 Deposit: \$750 per person (nonrefundable)
<b>GROUP SIZE:</b>	Limited to 12 guests

**INCLUDED:** All accommodations, transfers, and meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on final day as indicated in the itinerary; beer, some alcoholic beverages at certain camps, with meals, and in vehicles; services of NHA Expedition Leader, travel costs for your WWF Expert, local guides and lodge staff; some gratuities; airport transfers on Day 1 and final day; permits and entrance fees; and all taxes.

**NOT INCLUDED:** Travel to and from start and end point of trip, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees, optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, souvenirs, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes, optional travel insurance, and required medical evacuation insurance.

**PAYMENTS:** A nonrefundable deposit of \$750 confirms your space. Payments are accepted by credit card or by check made out to Natural Habitat Adventures.

**CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:** Cancellations must be received in writing at NHA by US mail, email or fax. At the time WWF receives your written cancellation, the following per person penalties apply: 121 days or more before departure: lose deposit. 120 to 61 days before departure: forfeit 50% of tour cost. 60 days or fewer before departure: no refund.

**INSURANCE:** Since the areas we travel to on this trip are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require medical evacuation insurance for our guests' safety. If you decline the medical evacuation insurance coverage offered by Natural Habitat Adventures, we request that you send us documentation of the independent coverage you have selected. We will add the cost of a medical evacuation policy to your tour invoice until you provide our office with proof of coverage including your insurance company's name, contact number and your individual policy number. Thank you for understanding that our policy exists exclusively in the interest of our guests' safety.

#### **GETTING THERE & GETTING HOME:**

**Arrival:** Please plan to arrive in Kasane, Botswana by 1:30 pm on Day 1

**Departure:** You are free to depart Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe anytime on the final day.

We highly recommend that Natural Habitat Adventures' air department staff make your reservations, as they are intimately familiar with the special requirements of this program. They can also make any necessary extra night hotel arrangements for you.

*While WWF Insider Journeys are intended for WWF's closest supporters and enhanced with WWF Experts, exclusive site visits, and enriched content, a minimum number of guests is required to run each trip. To avoid canceling, WWF and Nat Hab may fill remaining available spots with WWF and non-WWF members.*