AFRIQUE UNIE · TRAVEL NOTEBOOK

Zambia in 11 days: a day-by-day itinerary

Zambia is the land of the authentic safari: few vehicles, renowned guides and walks in the bush. This eleven-day route starts with the spectacle of Victoria Falls seen from Livingstone, continues by canoe among the hippos of the Lower Zambezi and ends in the Luangwa Valley, birthplace of the walking safari and kingdom of the leopard. Here are the stages, the flights to plan and the best season.

Day by day

Days 1-2 · Victoria Falls and Devil's Pool (night : Livingstone)

Livingstone, a small town about ten kilometres from the falls, has an international airport. On the first day, walk the trails of the falls park on the Zambian side: you follow the edge of the gorge, go down to the Boiling Pot, where the river swirls, then cross the Knife-Edge Bridge, often in the spray. In the dry season, roughly from mid-August to the end of the year, a boat trip takes you to Livingstone Island and Devil's Pool, a natural pool on the very lip of the drop, to be booked ahead. At high water, from March to May, these trips are suspended, but the falls are at their most spectacular: bring a raincoat.

Day 3 · Mosi-oa-Tunya and the Zambezi (night : Livingstone)

Above the falls, the small Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park is home to white rhinos, which you approach on foot with a ranger, as well as giraffes, zebras and antelopes. Go in the morning, before the heat. In the afternoon, visit the Livingstone Museum, devoted to the explorer and the region's history, or choose something more active: rafting in the gorges in the dry season, or a microlight or helicopter flight over the falls. End with a sunset cruise on the Zambezi, upstream of the falls, among hippos and elephants coming to drink on the islands.

Day 4 · On to Lusaka (night : Lusaka)

The simplest option is the domestic flight from Livingstone to Lusaka, about an hour. By road, allow six to seven hours for nearly five hundred kilometres, with plenty of lorries. Lusaka is a modern, sprawling capital with little focus on tourism, but a few places are worth a stop: Kabwata market, where craftspeople sell basketry and carvings, the Sunday market at Arcades, and the orphaned elephant centre on the edge of Lusaka National Park, with limited visiting hours. Go to bed early: transfers to the Lower Zambezi often leave first thing the next day.

Days 5-7 · Canoeing on the Lower Zambezi (night : Lower Zambezi)

Lower Zambezi National Park is reached by light aircraft from Lusaka in about half an hour, or by road to Chirundu, three to four hours, then by boat or track. Here the Zambezi spreads out between islands and wooded banks, opposite Mana Pools National Park in Zimbabwe. The great experience is canoeing downstream with a guide, among hippos and elephants crossing the river channels; it takes place on calm water but means following instructions strictly. Alternate with game drives, boat trips in search of lions and birds, and catch-and-release tigerfish fishing.

Days 8-10 · Walking safaris in South Luangwa (night : Mfuwe)

Return to Lusaka, then take the flight to Mfuwe, about an hour and a quarter, the gateway to South Luangwa National Park; the road exists but takes a full day. The Luangwa Valley is one of the best parks in Africa for leopards, especially on night drives, which are allowed here. It is also the birthplace of the walking safari: with a guide and an armed ranger, you follow tracks, learn to read the bush and approach Thornicroft's giraffes, elephants and buffalo. Hippos number in the hundreds in the river. At the end of the dry season, the valley puts on a remarkable show around the last waterholes.

Day 11 · Departure from Mfuwe (night : Flight home)

Enjoy one last game drive at dawn, when the big cats return from hunting, before heading to Mfuwe airport for the flight to Lusaka and your international connection. Leave a good margin between the two flights: small domestic planes can be delayed. If you have time, stop on the way at one of Mfuwe's textile and craft workshops, which employ people from the valley and sell hand-printed fabrics. Some travellers continue to neighbouring Malawi, whose border is a few hours away by road.

Getting around

Distances are large and roads sometimes in poor condition: most travellers combine domestic flights, between Livingstone, Lusaka and Mfuwe, with transfers arranged by the lodges, by vehicle, boat or light aircraft. Traffic drives on the left. A self-drive 4x4 trip is possible for experienced travellers, but the road to South Luangwa and access to the Lower Zambezi are demanding, especially in the rainy season. Avoid driving at night. The KAZA univisa, when available, lets you cross to the Zimbabwean side to see the falls from another angle.

When to go

The dry season, from June to October, is the best for safaris: vegetation thins out and wildlife gathers near water. September and October are very hot. Victoria Falls is at peak flow from March to May, with spray that sometimes hides the view, and much lower at the end of the year, when Devil's Pool becomes accessible. Many bush camps close during the rainy season, from November to April.

Practical information

Zambia

Entry	Depends on your passport: visiterafriqueunie.com/en/visa/zambia/
Yellow fever	Certificate required if arriving from a risk country
Malaria	throughout the country
Currency	Zambian kwacha (ZMW)
Languages	English, Bemba, Nyanja
Plugs	type C, D, G · dialling code +260 · UTC+2
Emergencies	police 991 · ambulance 992 · fire 993

Departure checklist

Documents

☐ Passport valid for at least six months after your return, with blank pages
☐ Visa or e-visa (printed if required)
☐ International vaccination certificate (yellow fever if required)
☐ Travel insurance certificate and assistance number
☐ Paper and digital copies of your passport and bookings
☐ Tickets, bookings and addresses saved offline
☐ International driving permit if you are hiring a vehicle

Health

☐ Travel consultation done and vaccinations up to date
☐ Malaria tablets if your doctor recommends them
☐ First-aid kit: plasters, antiseptic, anti-diarrhoea tablets, rehydration salts
☐ Mosquito repellent suitable for the tropics
☐ Sunscreen, hat and sunglasses
☐ Personal medication and prescriptions

Money and connectivity

☐ Bank told, Visa or Mastercard (and a backup card)
☐ Cash in euros or dollars, recent notes in good condition
☐ eSIM or local SIM card sorted
☐ Plug adapter for the country
☐ Power bank and cables
☐ Offline maps downloaded
☐ Afrique Unie app installed

In the bag

☐ Light clothes that cover up (sun, mosquitoes, places of worship)
☐ A fleece for evenings, dawn safaris and altitude
☐ Walking shoes and sandals
☐ Head torch
☐ Water bottle (ideally with a filter)
☐ Small daypack and waterproof pouches
☐ Luggage padlock

Before you close the door

☐ Your government's travel advice reread
☐ Trip registered with your consular service (if it offers this)
☐ Itinerary and contacts left with someone close
☐ Online check-in done and baggage allowance checked

Notebook made from visiterafriqueunie.com/en/itineraries/zambia-in-11-days/ · information checked in November 2026 against official sources. Entry, health and safety rules change: check them again before you leave (your country's official advice, the embassy of the country you visit).