
Rovos Rail & Zambezi Queen



Rovos Rail & Zambezi Queen

Pretoria - Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe - Chobe River Front

11 Days / 10 Nights

Date of Issue: 12 January 2018



[Click here to view your Digital Itinerary](#)

Overview

Accommodation	Destination	Nights	Basis	Room Type
Rovos Rail		3		
→ Pretoria	Pretoria			
Victoria Falls Safari Lodge	Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe	2	B&B	
Zambezi Queen	Chobe River Front	3	B&B	
Sanctuary Chobe Chilwero Lodge	Chobe River Front	2	B&B	

Key

B&B: Bed and breakfast

Price From USD 4,400 per person

Day 1: Rovos Rail, Pretoria

Day Itinerary

09h30 The train departs Rovos Rail Station in Pretoria.

13h00 Lunch is served in the dining cars as the train travels north through Warmbaths and Nylstroom, crossing the Tropic of Capricorn.

Enjoy afternoon tea and dinner en route to Messina and Beitbridge for Zimbabwe border formalities.

(Breakfast 07h00-10h00 • Lunch 13h00 • Tea 16h30 • Dinner 19h30)

Pretoria

The cosmopolitan city of Pretoria, also known as 'Tshwane', is situated in the province of Gauteng and functions as one of three capitals of South Africa. Pretoria has been dubbed 'The Jacaranda City', which is owed to the annual bloom of magnificent purple blossoms that adorn the Jacaranda trees which line the wide avenues of the city. This cosmopolitan city boasts several historic monuments, fine government buildings, and fascinating museums. Visitors can enjoy a wide variety of interesting sites including: The Transvaal Museum, a natural history museum showcasing an ancient dinosaur fossil found at the nearby Cradle of Humankind; the Pretoria Botanical Gardens, offering visitors a glimpse of different biomes; and the Voortrekker Monument, a National Heritage Site. Don't miss the nearby Austin Roberts Bird Sanctuary as well as the beautiful Wonderboom and Groenkloof Nature Reserves.

Overnight: Rovos Rail [View iBrochure](#)

Rovos Rail has earned an international reputation for its truly world class travel experiences. Exceptional train safaris combine some of Africa's most magnificent scenery with travel aboard an authentically refurbished Edwardian-style train, accommodating up to 72 guests in the most spacious train suites in the world, each with their own en-suite bathroom and subtle modern conveniences. The nine scheduled journeys begin or end at Rovos Rail Station, the headquarters and private station of this independent railway company, which is situated in Pretoria.



Stops

Pretoria

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Day 2: Rovos Rail

Day Itinerary

Day at leisure. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served as the train travels towards Bulawayo via Rutenga and Somabhula. Overnight stop on board at Mpopoma.

Day 3: Rovos Rail

Day Itinerary

07h00 Breakfast is served as the train departs Mpopoma.

13h00 Enjoy lunch while travelling along the eastern edge of Hwange Park along one of Africa's longest stretches of straight railway line – 114 kilometres.

15h00 Arrive at Kennedy Siding for a game drive at The Hide.

19h30 Dinner is served in the dining cars en route to Thompsons Junction for the overnight stop.



Day 4: **Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe**

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Resting on the southern banks of the Zambezi River at the western end of the eponymous falls, this popular tourist town is compact enough to walk around and makes an ideal base for travellers exploring the seventh wonder of the world, the unfathomably vast Victoria Falls. About two thirds of the falls can be viewed from the Zimbabwean side and, while the falls are undoubtedly the star attraction, the area provides both adventure seekers and sightseers with plenty of opportunities to warrant a longer stay. Popular activities include scenic flights over the falls in helicopters or micro lights, bungee jumping off the Victoria Falls Bridge, white-water rafting (seasonal), and day trips to Chobe National Park. The town itself offers some excellent accommodation and restaurant options as well as an eclectic variety of African curios and authentic art sold by friendly Zimbabwean locals who are wonderfully welcoming and eager to help you enjoy your stay.

Overnight: Victoria Falls Safari Lodge [View iBrochure](#)

Built on a plateau overlooking the Zambezi National Park, Victoria Falls Safari Lodge is just 4km from the majestic Victoria Falls and offers a unique wildlife experience.

We're proud to have been voted Best Safari Lodge/ Resort Hotel in Zimbabwe for 20 consecutive years and look forward to welcoming you to our wonderful destination. Our staff are warm and personable, and will ensure your holiday is hassle-free.

Built of thatch and timber, the lodge rises several levels, giving the impression of a vast open-plan tree house. Our rooms all have private balconies, most of which overlook a central waterhole, offering the opportunity to observe herds of buffalo, elephant and kudu, as the sun goes down, and hyenas later in the evening.

Dining

Dining options include the a la carte MaKuwa-Kuwa Restaurant, the more casual Buffalo Bar and The Boma – Dinner & Drum Show. The Boma Café, set in a tranquil garden setting and located close to the Lokuthula Lodges, offers breakfast and light meals until 4.30pm.



Included

Bed & Breakfast

Day 5: Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Included

Bed & Breakfast

Day 6: Zambezi Queen, Chobe River Front

Day Itinerary

Please note this important travel information:

Make sure that you get your passport stamped at the airport when you enter Botswana

You'll then be met by a representative at the airport who will help with your luggage and transfer you to the Kasane Immigration Office (KIO) in an air-conditioned vehicle

Once you arrive at KIO, a Zambezi Queen Collection staff member will meet you and help with formalities at passport control as you exit Botswana

You'll then be transferred by a smaller tender boat with a Zambezi Queen Collection staff member to the Namibian Immigration Office

You then need to get your passport stamped at the Namibian Immigration Office. Please wear comfortable shoes, as there is a short walk to the immigration office

If you arrive with the 13:00 and 14:00 transfers, you'll be served lunch, while if you're transferred at 15:00 or 16:00 you'll be served a snack before the sunset cruise by tender boat starts. Once all our guests have boarded in the late

afternoon, and if the weather permits, we'll go in search of some big game by tender boat. This is the perfect time of day to make the most of that golden glow of the African sunset by getting some iconic shots of the animals as they gravitate towards the river before night falls.

Return back to the Zambezi Queen and freshen up before meeting your Captain on the upper deck with a welcome cocktail. After a safety briefing, you'll make your way to the dining room where you'll be served a delectable three-course dinner along with an excellent choice of paired wines. Finish off with an espresso or nightcap at the bar before retiring to the night sounds of Africa in the distance.

Chobe River Front

The Chobe River forms the northern boundary of the Chobe National Park, renowned for its diverse and abundant game viewing opportunities. This section of the park is best known for its dense concentration of wildlife including elephant and hippo populations, but the waters attract all manner of game including large herds of buffalo and the lions that prey on them. A visit to this area guarantees close encounters with an array of African wildlife. Visitors can look forward to some exciting activities such as: driving along the game-dotted river banks in a 4WD; cruising along the river in a motorboat, spotting rare birdlife and for a unique, luxury safari experience, hire a houseboat.

Overnight: Zambezi Queen [View iBrochure](#)

A FLOATING BOUTIQUE HOTEL IN A CLASS OF HER OWN

Moving along the banks of the great Chobe River, Zambezi Queen is a 5-star, 42-metre long luxury houseboat offering unparalleled sophistication in one of the most remote locations on the planet. Best of all, as a guest on the vessel, you can enjoy a truly unique and adventurous river safari holiday while still being surrounded by complete comfort and elegance.

Each of the 14 suites on Zambezi Queen features air-conditioning and your own private balcony, where you can enjoy unobstructed views of the Chobe River and African landscape beyond. Wake up to the sight of an elephant drinking from the river, or watch a fish eagle take flight – all from the comfort of your own luxurious bed.

Unlike a land-based lodge, Zambezi Queen navigates roughly 25km of the Chobe River, allowing you to explore different vantage points and enjoy unparalleled game viewing. The banks of the Chobe National Park boast one of the densest populations of elephant on the African continent - estimated at approximately 120 000. The Park is also home to a large number of buffalo, leopard and lion, along with a variety of antelope and abundant birdlife.



IncludedBed & Breakfast

Day 7: Zambezi Queen, Chobe River Front

Day Itinerary

We know that some guests like to watch the sunrise as they sip on their coffee while others like to take a more leisurely approach. That's why we let you choose your morning activities, depending on the type of holiday you're searching for. Perhaps you want to enjoy a water-based safari or a village tour on the Namibian side of the river? Or perhaps you'd prefer a spot of bird watching or fishing instead? You may even decide to simply remain on board as the luxurious Zambezi Queen glides its way along the banks of the Chobe River.

After your morning activities, enjoy lunch on board while using your unique vantage point to spot wild animals and drink in the expansive views. Join our guide in the afternoon for a water-based safari on a tender boat where you can get up close to an array of wildlife, including some of the 120 000 elephants for which the Chobe is well known. After a delicious dinner, settle down for a restful and tranquil night in your luxurious suite.

IncludedBed & Breakfast

Day 8: Zambezi Queen, Chobe River Front

Day Itinerary

After a hearty breakfast, head off to experience those activities you didn't manage to fit in yesterday: enjoy a water-based river safari by tender boat, go bird watching or go fishing for tiger or bream. Return for lunch on board and some relaxation time before the afternoon activities start. Again, you have the choice between tiger or bream fishing, game viewing by tender boat or bird watching. In the evening, you're in for a treat. Enjoy our traditional African dinner, served with festive African singing and dancing. You can even join in the festivities if you feel like it!

IncludedBed & Breakfast

Day 9: Sanctuary Chobe Chilwero Lodge, Chobe River Front

Day Itinerary

Enjoy a morning cruise during breakfast as you do your last bit of animal spotting and take some memorable pictures. Bid our crew a reluctant farewell and then make your way via boat to the Namibian Immigration Office. Once you've had your documents stamped you'll be transferred via boat to the Kasane Immigration Office where you'll have your documents stamped once again before entering Botswana.

Chobe River FrontSee Above

Overnight: Sanctuary Chobe Chilwero Lodge [View iBrochure](#)

Sanctuary Chobe Chilwero is a luxurious retreat in the heart of the bush, located on the edge of Chobe National Park, the second largest national park in Botswana, where some 80,000 elephants roam. From the lodge's hilltop position, guests can enjoy far reaching panoramic views over the Chobe River and floodplain below. The main public area includes a lounge, library and dining room, which are linked to outdoor viewing patios.

Guests are able to relax in the split-level swimming pool or unwind with a pampering session in the full service spa complete with a treetop treatment room.



Included

Bed & Breakfast

Day 10: Sanctuary Chobe Chilwero Lodge, Chobe River Front

Activities

Chobe Game Viewing

Chobe Game Viewing

Chobe is renowned for its excellent game viewing, especially for herds of elephants which come down to the river to drink.

Included

Bed & Breakfast

Day 11: Departure

Activities

Chobe National Park Game Viewing

Chobe National Park Game Viewing

The Chobe National Park in Botswana is only a 1¾-hour drive from Victoria Falls. It is one of the greatest game reserves in southern Africa, famous for its elephant numbers. The Chobe River and Caprivi flood plains provide a haven for huge herds of buffalo, elephant, zebra, wildebeest and impala which are followed closely by lions, hyenas and leopards and the bird life is exceptional.

Transport

Transfers

Date	Company	Pick Up	Drop Off	Time	Vehicle
		OR Tambo International Airport [JNB]	Capital Park Station		
		Victoria Falls Station	Victoria Falls Safari Lodge		
		Victoria Falls Safari Lodge	Zambezi Queen		
		Zambezi Queen	Sanctuary Chobe Chilwero Lodge		
		Sanctuary Chobe Chilwero Lodge	Kasane Airport [BBK]		

Journey Information

Date	Train	Agency	Departure Platform	Time	Arrival Platform	Time	Class	Ref
	Train		Capital Park Station		Victoria Falls Station			

Travel Information



A nation of spectacular natural beauty, friendly people and rich culture, Zimbabwe's status as one of Africa's leading safari destinations was dampened for years by its political instability. But now that the country is transcending its strife and returning to a state of equilibrium, it is once again emerging as a vacation highlight of the continent. Victoria Falls – known to locals as 'The Smoke That Thunders' – is one of the seven natural wonders of the world and the sheer power of this massive body of water plunging into the Zambezi Gorge is awe-inspiring and unforgettable. Lake Kariba, with its game-rich shores and islands, is an idyllic safari spot featuring mind-blowing sunsets; Hwange National Park is known for its huge herds of elephants; and a kayak trip down the Zambezi through the Mana Pools National Park will appeal to the intrepid traveller, providing close encounters with crocodiles, hippos and a host of other wildlife.

Banking and Currency

Currency

Zimbabwe uses US\$ as well as its own unit of currency, the Zimbabwe Bond Dollar. It is advised to carry small denominations of change with you, however it is best to pay for as much as possible outside of the country. US\$ work best and are widely accepted in supermarkets, and for curios, accommodation, activities and gratuities. South African Rand and Euros are only accepted in some places in Victoria Falls. Do not plan on being able to use cash machines in Zimbabwe to draw money. Before leaving home please exchange all the money that you will need for your trip, plus extra, into US\$. Most of this should be in 1, 5, 10 and 20 denominations because change is not always available. In an emergency you can try Barclays Bank, Stanbic Bank or Standard Chartered Bank as they will infrequently accept foreign debit cards for withdrawing cash.

Banking

Banks in Zimbabwe are open for business Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 08h00 to 15h00, on Wednesdays from 08h00 to 13h00 and Saturdays from 08h00 to 11h30. They are closed on Sundays and Public Holidays.

Only VISA and MasterCard are accepted in Zimbabwe, however it should be noted that very limited facilities will have credit card machines, and the connection is not always reliable so it is advisable to carry cash as back up.

Travel, Transport and Getting Around

Taxis are safe and reliable, and can be booked through your hotel front desk. Taxis in cities travel within a 40km radius of the city. Always take a taxi at night.

Major airlines fly into Victoria Falls, Harare and Bulawayo. Charter flights are available to most attractions and camps.

Zimbabwe has a good road infrastructure, by African standards, although potholed. Between major towns, there are frequent road blocks. Traffic drives on the left side of the road.

If you are driving yourself around Zimbabwe, be sure to check on fuel availability in advance. If you are covering long distances within the country, ensure you carry extra fuel in 5 or 10lt metal containers in case of emergency. Fuel is generally available, but supply can fluctuate. Fuel is only available for cash.

Food, Drink and Cuisine Advice

Zimbabwe's native cuisine is based on sadza, a cooked porridge made from ground maize which is normally accompanied by some tasty relish, perhaps made of meat and tomatoes, or dried fish. Safari camps will often prepare sadza if requested, and it is almost always available in small restaurants in the towns.

Camps, hotels and lodges that cater to overseas typically serve a variety international fare, and the quality of food prepared in the most remote bush camps is usually excellent.

If you are driving yourself around and plan to cook, then get most of your supplies in main towns. There are a number of South African shopping chains operating in Zimbabwe which will generally have all that you will need.

Water in the main towns is usually purified.. The locals drink it, and are used to the relatively innocuous bugs that it may harbour. If you are in the country for a long time, then it may be worth acclimatising yourself to it. However, if you are in Zimbabwe for just a short period of time, then try to drink only bottled, boiled, or treated water available in towns and from all camps, lodges and hotels.

Climate and Weather

In Zimbabwe, the rains come principally in **December, January, February** and **March**; the further north you are, the earlier the precipitation arrives and the later it leaves. Zimbabwe's higher eastern areas usually receive more rainfall than the lower-lying western ones.

By **April** and **May** most of the rain is gone, leaving a verdant setting, which is starting to dry out. Especially in more southerly and higher locations, the night-time temperatures start to drop.

The nights in **June, July** and **August** become much cooler, so don't forget to bring some warmer clothes, in case you want to spend an evening outside; the days are still clear and warm. For Zimbabwe, this is the start of the 'peak season'— days are often cloudless and game sightings continually increase.

Into **September** and **October** the temperatures rise once again: Zimbabwe's lower-lying rift valley – Mana Pools – can get very hot in October. During this time, you'll see some fantastic game, as the Zimbabwe's wildlife concentrates around the limited water sources.

November is unpredictable; it can be hot and dry, it can also see the season's first rainfalls – and in this respect it's a very interesting month, as on successive days, you can see both weather patterns.

Clothing and Dress Recommendations

When in Zimbabwe the cardinal rule is to wear casual, comfortable clothes during the day as temperatures can get very hot. It is advisable to wear light loose fitting clothing, such as cotton or linen, as they are cool and easy to wash. Warmer clothes are advised for the evenings and rainwear for the wet season.

A brimmed hat and sunglasses are a good idea year round. Long sleeved shirts and long trousers will also guard against the scorching sun rays. It is recommended you wear light shoes, especially if your itinerary entails a lot of walking.

For safaris, please remember to wear appropriate clothing and shoes. Earth colour clothes, such as browns, greens and tans are advisable.

Electricity and Plug Standards

Current is 220/240 volts at 50 cycles per second. Both square and round plugs are used.



Situated in the southern reaches of Africa, Botswana is renowned for its pristine wilderness areas characterised by deep lagoons, wetlands, lush palms, rugged hills and desert plains scattered with scrubland. The country's primary tourist draw card is undoubtedly the vast red expanse of the Kalahari desert and its remarkably beautiful Okavango Delta, the largest inland delta in the world. These natural wonders provide a tranquil haven for an abundance of African wildlife to thrive. Other highlights include the impressive Makgadikgadi Salt Pans, where visitors are privy to massive zebra migrations during the flood season; the Savuti plains, which host large prides of lions; and the Tsodilo Hills, where 4500 rock paintings form a unique record of human settlement over many millennia.

Entry Requirements

Effective from 1 June 2017, all travellers to Botswana (with the exception of residents and citizens of the Southern African Development Community) will have to pay a tourism development levy. According to Botswana Tourism, the objective of the levy is to raise funds for conservation and natural tourism development. The \$30 (€27) levy will be payable at all ports of entry, including airports and border posts, through electronic payment machines, cash, and debit and credit cards. After the payment, a unique receipt corresponding to the passport will be automatically generated. The receipt is presented to immigration officials and the passport and the receipt will be stamped and handed back to the traveller. The receipt will be valid for a 30-day period and can be used for multiple entries.

Banking and Currency

Currency

Botswana's currency is Pula (which means 'rain' in Setswana). It is divided into 100 thebe (which means 'shield' in Setswana). Travellers' cheques and foreign currency may be changed at banks, bureaux de change and authorised hotels.

The US dollar, Euros, British Pound and the South African Rand are the most easily convertible currencies (and accepted by some establishments - but, generally, then an inflated rate of exchange will be applied).

Banking

Seven main commercial banks, as well as a number of foreign exchange bureaux, operate in Botswana. Operating hours are Monday to Friday 08h30 to 15h30 and Saturday 08h30 to 10h45.

Full banking services are available in major towns, although ATMs are sprouting up all over the country. Most credit cards are accepted at hotels and restaurants. Cultural sites and community art and craft outlets usually only accept cash.

Travel, Transport and Getting Around

Public transport in Botswana is geared towards the needs of the local populace and is confined to main roads between major population centres. Although cheap and reliable, it is of little use to the traveller as most of Botswana's tourist attractions lie off the beaten track.

Driving off the main roads in Botswana is only recommended to experts in 4x4 vehicles, that are equipped correctly. Most lodges offer transfers or they can be arranged. If, however, you will be driving in Botswana: your home driving licence will be accepted (with an official English translation if necessary; driving is on the left side of the road; and the national speed limit is on tarred roads is 120km/h and 60km/h in towns and villages.

Be sure to watch out for wild animals on the roads!

There are major airports in Maun, Kasane and Gaborone, while smaller charter flights are used to get to the other top attractions and camps.

Food, Drink and Cuisine Advice

Tap water is considered safe to drink, although outside main cities and towns, visitors are advised to check first and sterilise water if in any doubt. Bottled water is available in most tourist centres. Filtered water is available at most camps and shops offer bottled water - it is advised to be well stocked of bottled water if you are travelling off the beaten track. Milk is pasteurised, and dairy products, local meat, poultry, seafood, fruit and vegetables are generally safe.

Safari lodges and camps serve international-style cuisine, generally of an extremely high standard, along with local beer and imported wine and spirits. Good restaurants and bars can be found in main towns, often within hotels. Beef and goat are very popular meats. Elsewhere, food is more basic: millet and sorghum porridge are the local staples.

A discretionary 5 to 10% tip is typical for restaurant bills. In many places, a service charge is automatically added. It is customary to tip the game guide and lodge staff while on safari.

Climate and Weather

Botswana's climatic pattern is typical of southern Africa, although its rainfall is less than countries further east. The rains in Botswana come mostly between December and March, when average minimum temperatures are in the low 20's. Some days will be bright and sunny, some will have afternoon thunderstorms, and some will just be grey.

As with Namibia, April and May in Botswana are generally lovely, with the sky clear and the landscape green. Night temperatures start to drop during these months, especially in the Kalahari. Note that places in and around the Okavango tend to have less extreme, more moderate temperatures than the drier areas of the Kalahari.

From June to August the night-time temperatures in drier areas can be close to freezing, but it warms up rapidly during the day, when the sky is usually clear and blue. It's now very much 'peak season' for most safari areas: the land is dry in most areas so the animals congregate around the few available water sources.

This continues into September and October, when temperatures climb again, drying the landscapes and concentrating the game even more. This is the best time for big game safaris – although October can feel very hot, with maximum temperatures sometimes approaching 40°C.

November is difficult to predict, as it can sometimes be a continuation of October's heat, whilst sometimes it's cooled by the first rains; it's always an interesting month.

Clothing and Dress Recommendations

In summer, lightweight, lightcoloured cottons are preferable. Avoid synthetic materials and black clothing, as they increase perspiration and discomfort. In winter, wear trousers, longsleeved shirts / blouses and jerseys. From May – August, night temperatures can fall below zero degrees celsius, so warm jerseys and jackets are vital, especially on morning and evening game drives. Garments of neutral colours that blend with the bush and forest are advisable for safaris and game viewing. Bring a lightweight jacket and/or jersey for unexpected temperature changes or rain. Closed, comfortable walking shoes or gym shoes are a must in all seasons. Special attention should be given to protection from the sun. Bring a sunhat, good quality sunscreen, sun lotion and polarised sunglasses. Wide brimmed sun hats are essential.

Electricity and Plug Standards

Electrical sockets (outlets) in Botswana are the "Type M " South African SABS1661 ("Large" 15 amp BS-546) sockets. This is actually an old British standard. The "Type M " South African plug and socket is not to be confused with the "Type D " Indian plug and socket. In pictures, they look very similar, but the South African type is much larger than the Indian type, and they are physically incompatible. If your appliance's plug doesn't match the shape of these sockets, you will need a travel plug adapter in order to plug in. Travel plug adapters simply change the shape of your appliance's plug to match whatever type of socket you need to plug into.

Electrical sockets (outlets) in Botswana usually supply electricity at between 220 and 240 volts AC. If you're plugging in an appliance that was built for 220-240 volt electrical input, or an appliance that is compatible with multiple voltages, then an adapter is all you need.

But travel plug adapters *do not change the voltage*, so the electricity coming through the adapter will still be the same 220-240 volts the socket is supplying. If you need to use appliances that are not compatible with 220-240 volt electrical input, you will need a voltage converter.
