

TRAVEL MAGAZINE TravelEssence

INAUGURAL ISSUE • JULY 2020

Victoria Falls Safari Lodge

A SAVANNAH EXPERIENCE
AT ITS BEST

MEET THE "BLACK CHEF"

Kudakwashe Makoni

Mati Martha Nyazema

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Hidden Secrets

OF THE
MARULA TREE

Bheki Dube

SPARKS YOUR
CURIO-CITY



Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden

Cape Town, South Africa

“Nestled against the eastern slope of Cape Town’s Table Mountain, lies the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, acclaimed as one of the world’s most prolific showcases of plant biodiversity.”

TravelEssence MAGAZINE

Culture • Lifestyle • Taste-Making



On The Cover:

DR MATI MARTHA NYAZEMA

(c) Robyn Davie Photography

Cover Design: Lambotique

Editorial

YVONNE C. MTENGWA

Editor-in-Chief

info@travelessencemag.com

DAPHINE MABHIZA

Content Director

daphinemabhiza@gmail.com

Design and Layout

JOSEPH TAFADZWA MULAMBO

Creative Director

lambotique@gmail.com

Marketing & Promotions

LOUISA CONRAD CHORUMA


Market Engagement Director


louiconrad@yahoo.co.uk


Contact Details


info@travelessencemag.com

www.travelessencemag.com

@Travelessencemagazine 

@TravelEssenceM1 

@TravelEssenceMag 

Travel Essence Magazine 

Editor's Welcome

I can't begin to tell you just how excited I am to introduce to the world – "Travel Essence Magazine". It began with a conversation with two of my girlfriends, over text message and in person, about what it would be to work on a project that had us share with our community, the culture, lifestyle and travel landscapes we collectively call our home. We are talking the people, many of whom are our friends, the places we used to visit during school trips or holidays with our parents – and that great feeling of nostalgia that envelops us when they watch a destination promotion video or read a blogger's article of their experience with climbing Mount Kilimanjaro or enjoying a sun-downer at one of the bistros in Camp's Bay. We each carried so many stories, but who would do all the telling if we didn't?

"For Africa to me... is more than a glamorous fact. It is a historical truth. No man can know where he is going unless he knows exactly where he has been and exactly how he arrived at his present place."

- MAYA ANGELOU



Who are we, and what do we want to be said about us, and the very strong, multifaceted essence of Mother Africa? In these short conversations, I realised that while I have lived and worked outside the coastline of Africa for half my life as a Publicist, as a Destination Marketer, as an Author, a family woman and so much more, there were still not enough instances that I had seen our untainted, yet beautiful story, being told from the hearts and minds of the continent's children.

Ecuadorian-born entrepreneur, pilot and author Steve Saint once said:

“Your story is the greatest legacy that you will leave to your friends. It’s the longest lasting legacy you will leave to your heirs.”

The world is awakening to a new norm in light of COVID-19, and with this signifies a new opportunity for us to do our part in telling the story of why more people, regardless of nationality, race and creed, should consider letting their feet run wild across Africa’s landscapes.

So, why Travel Essence Magazine? Why now? Who for?

We are connectors. We are adventurers. We are passionate about showcasing the touristic grandeur that is the continent from which we were born. We believe now is as best a time as any to contribute towards the redrafting of Africa’s narra-

tive, by delivering a publication that connects people of diverse origins to the essence of Mother Africa; doing so through curated content and exhaustive story-telling.

Travel Essence Magazine seeks to be the voice the generations that were either born in Africa or now inhabit lands beyond the coastlines of Africa, who still possess a distinctive attachment to their place of birth on African soil. Our story is about showcasing the rich diversity of travel, lifestyle and curated experiences offered by the continent’s tastemakers, entrepreneurs and organisations, as they welcome travelers from beyond our coasts to a piece of our world.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the wonderful men and women who are a part of our inaugural issue of Travel Essence Magazine. Your support and belief in our mission to promote the best of our people and brands in travel and leisure is invaluable. We thank you and salute your zeal as you forge ahead with opening your doors to the world again in this season.

To our readers, we sincerely hope you will enjoy the Travel Essence Magazine experience!

Love and Light!

Yvonne C. Mtengwa

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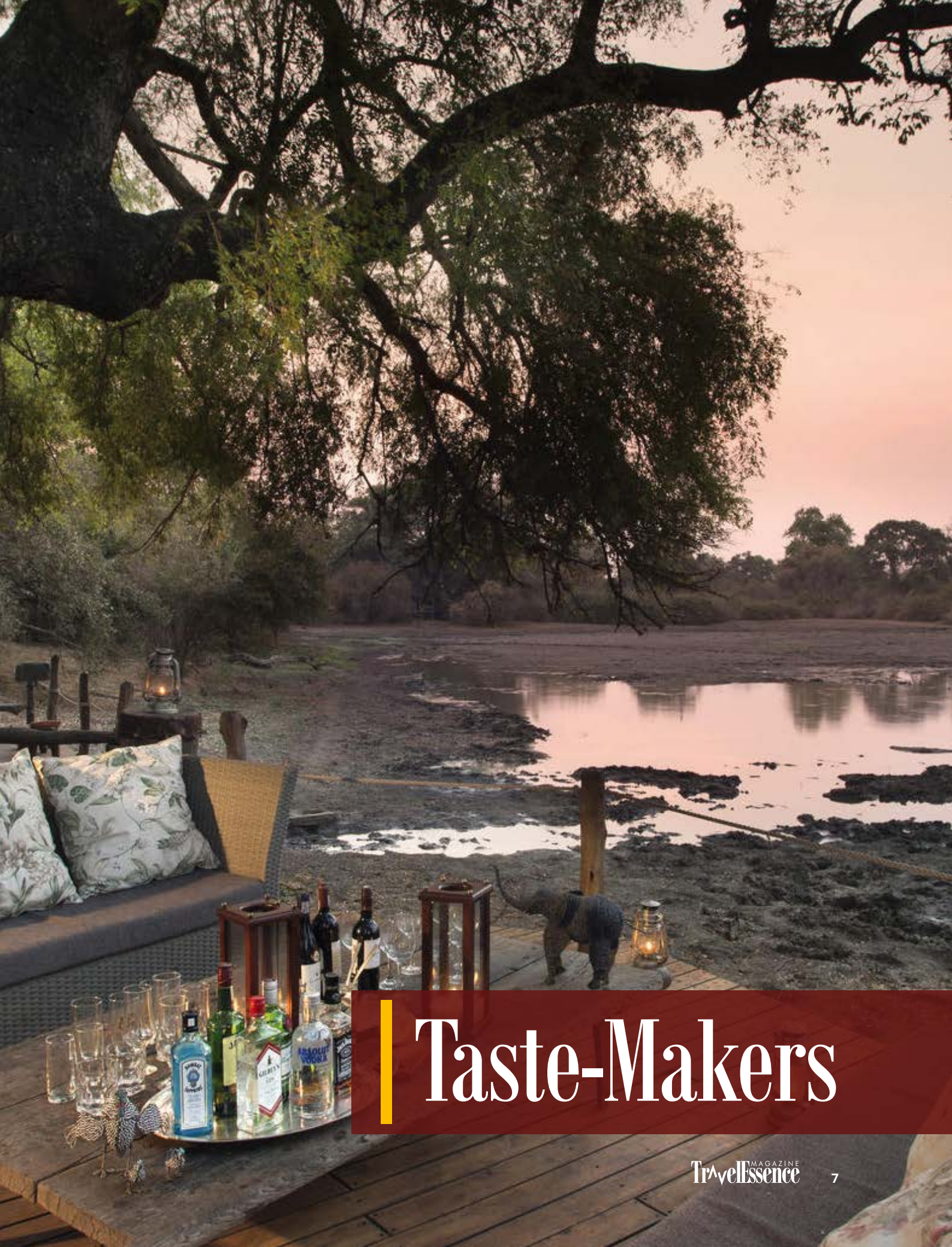
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Taste-Makers



Dr. Matifadza Nyazema

LEVELS UP WITH
MBANO MANOR
HOTEL



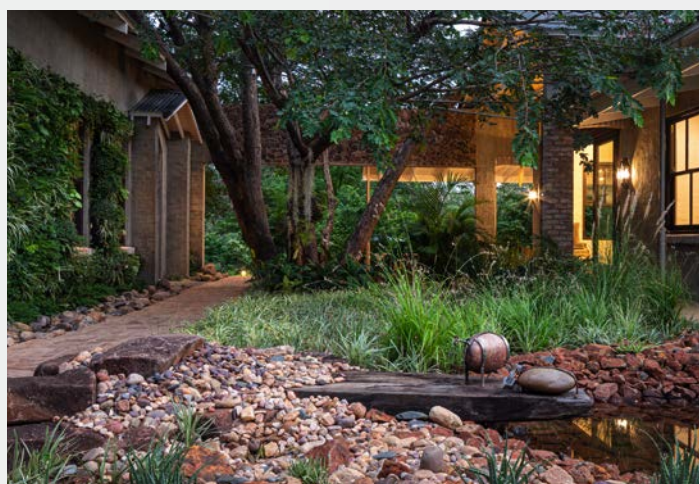
The luxurious all-suite hotel opened its doors to guests in January 2020

Notable hospitality and tourism industry professional, having overseen the operations and marketing remits of some of Southern Africa's most prolific hospitality gems since the late 90s, Dr. Matifadza Nyazema is no stranger to the hard work that comes with realising the manifestation of a dream. With a career characterised by senior positions in the airline, hotels and convention centre landscape, Mati was never short of the inspiration that would result in her embarking on her ambitions to build and manage her very own hospitality venture. And so, as tenacity would allow her, in January 2020, Mati witnessed her dream come true - the much anticipated Mbanda Manor Hotel opening; a project she had long invested her effort into raising capital for, before turning to the shovel for groundbreaking and construction.



The all-suite premium luxury boutique hotel ushers in a new luxury product offering for Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe's iconic destination for leisure and thrill-seekers. A small area in the hotel lounge is dedicated to Mati's personal story, and to the rich meaning and significance of the hotel name, Mbanu. Also a former journalist and avid writer, Mati has shared throughout the hotel public areas and the suites, a large collection of books referenced from her doctorate studies, and covering topics such as politics, race relations, affirmative action and economic empowerment, and hotel and sustainable tourism development.

"The support and interest received from the travel trade and general public during the count down to the hotel opening, has been tremendous. We are receiving regular inquiries from tour operators to visit Mbanu Manor Hotel and they have not been disappointed." says Mati, Owner and Executive Director of Mbanu Manor Hotel.





“We believe that Mbanjo Manor hotel will become a firm favourite within the boutique hotel market, and a destination of choice for leisure and business travellers visiting Victoria Falls,” she chimed in when asked to share her thoughts on the resort town’s newest addition to the luxury hospitality offering. The hotel is one of the few luxury hotels in the area located within a few kilometres from the majestic Victoria Falls. If you’ve never been to Victoria Falls, you’ll be thrilled to note that its notoriety stems from it being the largest curtain of water in the world, estimated to be around 1708m wide, before cascading 98m down into the mighty Zambezi river.

In the hospitality industry, location is everything; a task that Dr. Mati held in high esteem as she went about searching for the land that would be home to Mbanjo Manor Hotel. “There are regular sightings of wildlife, including elephants and buffalo, passing by the hotel on their way to the majestic Zambezi River.



We recently witnessed a large herd of elephants strolling past the hotel one evening. Guests can be so fortunate to catch a glimpse of buffalo herds grazing along the Mbanu perimeter, also on their way to the river” she cites.

The luxurious nature-based experience that Mbanu Manor Hotel offers, truly invokes feelings of old-world charm and comfort, while providing guests a space to unwind and enjoy the calm, serenity and exclusivity of the boutique hotel. The suites-only hotel features 18 spacious and private suites scattered across a four-acre site in sets of two and nestled within a natural teak tree forest. Guests can choose to walk to their suites or be shuttled across the property grounds in golf carts.



Boasting world class amenities and service for solo travellers, family holidays, romantic escapes, and corporate retreats, each private suite has a generous veranda, a fitting space for guests to relax outdoors as they take in the pristine scenery of being surrounded by the beauty of lush vegetation and sounds of nature. Traditional teak shutters unfold to reveal large windows and doors, flooding spacious rooms with natural light. All suites feature a relaxing lounge area with a spacious bedroom and a separate bathroom

overlooking a private courtyard. When asked about the design aesthetic, Mati shares:

“Each suite has been designed to offer a feeling of escape and seclusion, making it the perfect getaway for our guests to really appreciate their quality down time away with family and friends.

“Adjoining suites also offer more space and privacy, perfect for extended family gatherings or wedding parties.”





There's plenty to get up to while in Victoria Falls, but when you are a guest at Mbano Manor Hotel, you'll be sure to notice that special attention to all the details went into ensuring that your stay would be as indulgent as it is relaxing. All suites are fully equipped with modern essentials, including air conditioning, TV and Wi-Fi connectivity.

In due course, a masterpiece Forest Villa is slated to open in a secluded and picturesque corner of the four-acre estate. The Forest Villa will boast its own gardens, plunge pool and private access. A king-size bedroom is complemented by two open lounges, a boardroom/dining area with separate access, and a double volume bathroom area featuring fine finishing and luxury couple amenities, including outdoor showers. A generous veranda wraps around three sides of the villa and the private plunge pool allows guests to cool down in privacy.





When asked why travellers to Africa should add Victoria Falls to their list of destinations to conquer, Mati cites, “Activities in the Victoria Falls vicinity are plentiful year-round and appeal to all ages and adventure seekers. Nature walks within the Victoria Falls National Park provide an immersive experience and spectacular view of the Falls in all entirety and might. Wildlife is plentiful in the natural forest, a paradise for nature lovers and bird watchers. There are countless reasons why one should consider making Victoria Falls their next holiday destination. It really is one of those special places that reminds you of the charm and majestic nature of the African savannah”.

And on the COVID-19 pandemic? This is obviously deemed a fair question to ask given just how much the global tourism and travel landscape has been impacted by the pandemic. “We have ensured that our product meets the standards and protocols outlined by national government and the United Nations World Health Organisation.

“Activities in the Victoria Falls vicinity are plentiful year-round to appeal to all ages and adventure seekers...”



The very design of Mbano allows for seclusion and privacy. We eagerly anticipate the return of international travellers and have been receiving inquiries for travel during late 2020 and into 2021. We have also adjusted our pricing and introduced flexible booking policies. We are confident that our guests will not be disappointed,” Mati concludes.

Of Sommeliers & luxury camps in Africa

A SPOTLIGHT
ON DIANE
CHIMBOZA





Diane, tell us about yourself, your upbringing and what generally makes you tick?

I was born and bred in Zimbabwe but always considered myself a citizen of the world. Now I just say I am 100% African. My background is in marketing and I am fortunate to have gained amazing experiences over the past 10 years. Most memorable for me was working on the FIFA World Cup Trophy by Coca Cola in 2009/2010 and travelling to 35 countries across the world, all on my infamous “Green bhomba” – what us Zimbabwean’s jokingly call our passport.

I currently live in Kenya, but I lived in the USA for 8 years, where I completed my Undergrad and Masters’ degrees. I then moved on to South Africa, where I lived for 2 years, before adding another two years in my home country of Zimbabwe. Now, I’m in my 5th year living in Kenya.

What makes me tick? Hard to pinpoint but I think it’s generally being firmly grounded in my faith, a love of life, experiences, family friends...and of course...a glass of good wine.



We've found following you on social media really very intriguing; the most compelling fact of which was what your profession encompasses as a wine and gin expert living in Kenya? Why Kenya and how did you find yourself in your line of work?

I moved to Kenya with my husband in 2015. We had moved back home to give it a go after we met in South Africa. I started a marketing company which was successful but there were more opportunities for its growth outside Zimbabwe. So, we took a chance and moved to Kenya.

Initially when I moved here, I really wanted what I called a "jobby job"; you know the grown up 9-5 ones where everything is secure. But as life would have it, I struggled a bit to get a job. I don't think it was lack of my experience or knowledge, but I really believe those doors were being closed because there was something

bigger planned for my life that I kept ignoring.

I am my father's daughter 100%. I seem to have always followed his footsteps. He trained as an accountant but ended up in marketing and advertising. So did I. He started a wine company and went into wine; and I was destined to go that same route no matter how hard I fought it.

For me it was a scary industry. I mean, I was really good and still am at drinking wine, but becoming an importer, distributor and trainer was just not something I thought I could do.

But it was my path. Knowing the pain and sacrifice that goes into starting a business, I was reluctant to go through that process again, more so in a country I had just moved to. I met my CEO through my dad (see God and his humor!) I started the Kenya country office from my home study and the rest became history.



Training hotel and luxury bush camp staff on wines and gins is part of the service that your company offers? What has the response been from your clients when they see a Zimbabwean woman arriving on the scene to give a training on all things 'aqua vitae'?

Confusion. We are in the middle of the bush, and here comes this girl who speaks toddler-level Swahili and wants to tell us about wine! Is this twilight zone?? But at the end of the day, we are all Africans and by the end of the day we are all beaming with pride that we have ubuntu and can

relate. The people I work with and train also all want to visit Zimbabwe by the end of it!

It's always amazing if we are out on a bush drive, either on the way to camp or during a "drinks stop" when I point out animals in Shona, my local language, and they say almost same thing in Swahili. We talk about how we are all bantu people, and how we are the same people just scattered around the continent, which is so evident in our language and customs. I feel so at home in the bush and sharing such familiar experiences with people.



What are you most proud of in terms of your knowledge-sharing capabilities in your industry?

My biggest lesson to people who have no exposure to wine is this: Wine makers are farmers; they need good seeds (in this case grapes and vines), optimum weather conditions and great people. If you can make a great local brew so whether it is Masese, Umqombothi, Changa or Moratina, you can make wine.

Also, people always remember their experience in a place – the people who served them, the food they ate and what they drank. You don't need to be a master sommelier. You just need to understand the basics and tell a story around what you are selling or recommending. After all, we are all master storytellers in one form or another.

From your experience with travelling to some pretty incredible destinations, how do you define the term 'guest experience' and what has been the most exciting part of your experiences thus far?

People travel so far to come and experience the beauty that is Africa. We want them to feel at home and to experience that warm African hospitality. That's what an amazing guest experience is to me; feeling like you are at home when you are so far away (sans lions roaring outside your tent of course).

Most exciting for me was chilling in our safari vehicle, all the sides up in the middle of a pride of 20 lions. Look, I love animals, but that was super close for me and no, I did not take any photos in case the click of my camera alerted them to this city girl. But this still remains one of my most amazing experiences. This is what people come here for; to experience those once in a lifetime, terrifying moments.





Traditionally, how do you think roles such as your own have been viewed over the years? What are some of the things you have done to create your own pathway in this very niche sector?

The wine industry has really opened up for people of color in Africa. We as a people have become more exposed and worldly. I find people want to be served by people like us, and it gives them – and us, an enormous sense of pride. I think there is still so much room for us to grow, we need to see some more black sommeliers and wine makers from the continent.

I'm inspired by my fellow Zimbabweans who are paving the way for us in the wine world, the likes of Tinashe Nyamudoka from Kumusha Wines and

former head sommelier of the Test Kitchen in Cape Town and Joseph Dafana from Mosi Wines and Gins and Head sommelier at La Colombe in Cape Town, who I have had both the pleasure to meet. I am totally such the fan girl! To get to this level, it requires heart, sacrifice, dedication and education. It's not enough to just fumble your way through these things. You have to dedicate time, effort and learning to become the best at your craft.

We were fortunate to host Joseph Dafana here in Kenya earlier this year, and to hear his story and how he got to where he is today was incredibly inspiring for a lot of aspiring wine stewards here in Kenya. I would love to see more of that exposure happening on the continent.

What does a day-in-the-life-of Diane look like?

Hectic. I wake up on demand, and usually this is dictated by almost 3 year-old twin boys who love to walk in to my room between 5.30 and 7am and say “Mangwanani mama” (Good morning mom!) and proceed to jump all over me and hubby! No respect for adults these days.

I have to say though, that as with everyone across the globe, I had a very different life pre-Covid-19. But now my day is trying to juggle homeschooling, which I can freely admit I am absolutely terrible at. I just salute teachers out there, as to me, teaching toddlers is like herding cats. It really takes a special grace to be able to do what they do. My days are about being on emails, zoom calls, making calls, and cooking, cleaning and taking care of the kids. Basically, Diane is trying her best to be a superwoman!

The Covid 19 era has also taught us that there are no excuses when it comes to keeping your business on the minds of your clients and customers. I’ve had to make a conscious effort to stay

on top of events and ensure our business remains relevant, especially given the fact that the majority of our clients in the hospitality were closed and some still do not have a clear timeline for re-opening.

It must be difficult juggling a career that involves significant travel while also being a family woman. What do you believe it takes for women, especially African women, to be able to excel in distinctive professions that are largely male dominated?

Belief in yourself and your abilities. I think self-confidence comes from being an expert and knowledgeable in your field and knowing that you can walk into any room and take command. I think that was my biggest fear going into the industry – what if they think I am a fraud and don’t know what I’m talking about? But learning from my colleagues and also taking the WSET courses, of which I am a level 3 certified, has really helped me a lot whole lot.

As you mentioned, you were born and raised in Zimbabwe, educated abroad and still

found your way back to “the Motherland”. If there could be one narrative to be shared with the world concerning living and doing business in Africa, what would that be for you and why?

Africa is open for business. Don’t believe the hype, don’t believe everything you read in the papers. Come live, learn, work and experience it for yourself and decide if this is the place for you. It can be challenging but what place isn’t?

You’ve had a long day of training a group of staff at a hotel or luxury camp. What does capping your day off look like for dinner, drinks and relaxation?

Oh man, after a long day I just want a long bath and sleep. Training involves drinking, in my case spitting but it can take a lot out of you! People have this assumption that I spend my days drinking and traveling to exotic places, but it’s so important in this industry to have discipline and to practice responsible drinking. But look, a nice glass of Cabernet never hurt anyone.

Two top picks for a distinctively African dish to pair with your beverage selection?

Our local foods scream pairing with wine, it's ridiculous that people aren't doing more of it. For me Sadza, chicken stew and greens with peanut butter ache for beautiful Chenin Blanc. On the reds, traditional sausage – mutura loves a delicious pinot noir or a merlot.

Your top 5 picks for travel hot-spots across Africa?

Kenya Coast – Lamu
Kenya Bush – Maasai Mara
Cape Town– Visit some black

owned vineyards!
Zimbabwe – Eastern Highlands, Vumba Mountains and Victoria Falls

What advice do you have for young people who may be interested in pursuing what you do as their career of choice?

Learn, learn and learn some more! There are a lot of great free resources out there like Wine Folly. A great starting point is Wines of South Africa – they have a breadth of info on South African wines. Also expand your palette and drink better. You need to expose yourself to more than what

you just know. So that means drinking Sauvignon Blanc from everywhere in the world and be able to difference and recognize why – largely because of where its grown.

Where can our readers learn more about your business and experiences in your industry from you?

Follow my company @Under-theinfluenceafrica on Instagram. And also, if you are in Zimbabwe and looking for a good wine, check out Danai Wines. They have a shop at Chisi Walk in Harare



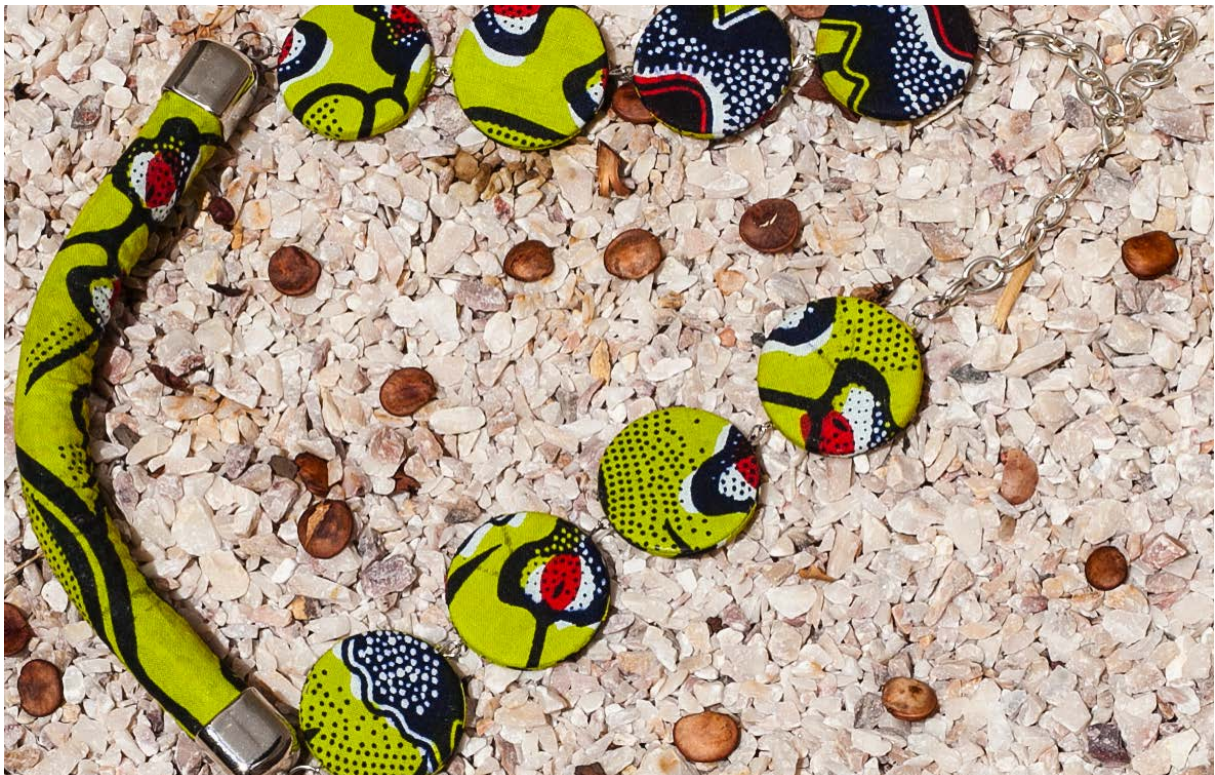
TRAVEL NURTURES Style Inspiration



“It is important for my brand identity to preserve as much of the natural environment around us as is possible. At Dee-Kaw-Zee, we prioritise sustainable fashion.”

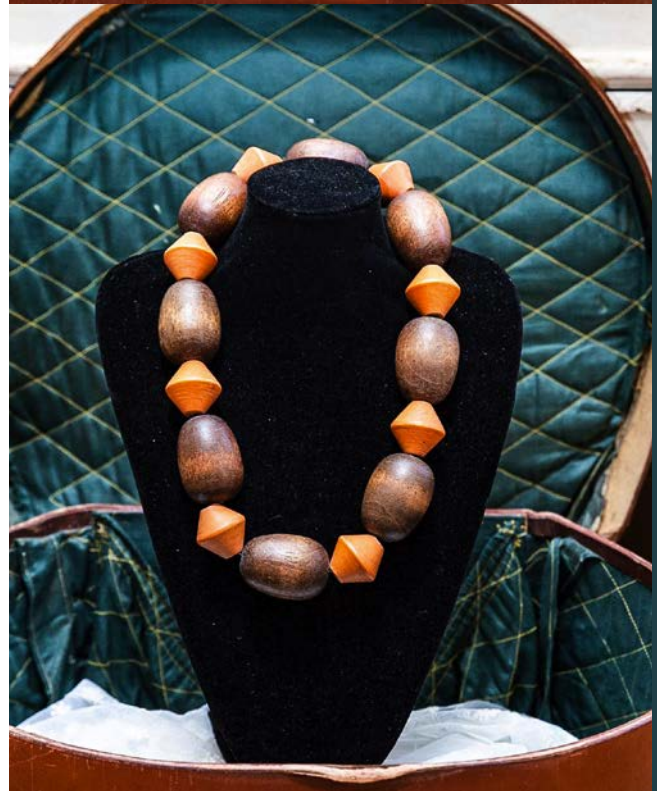
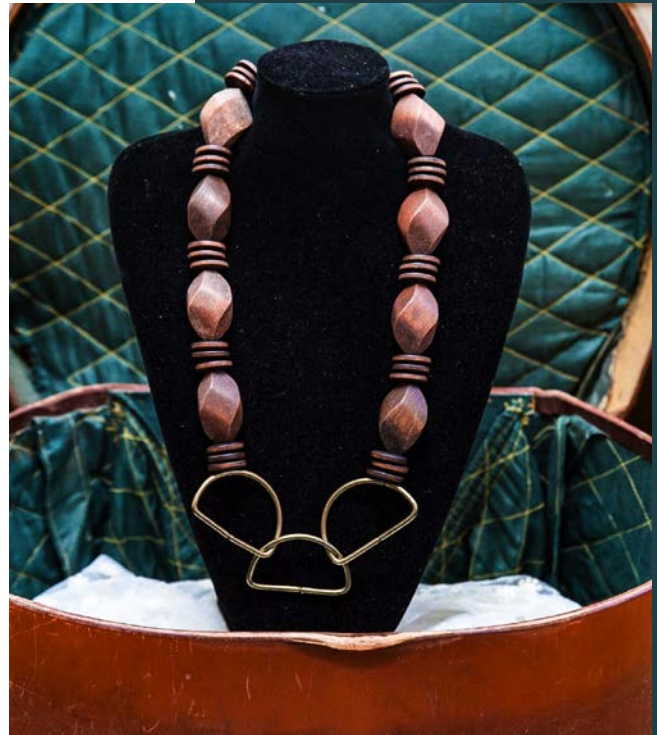
I never realised how much I loved to travel until I ventured to destinations I only dreamed about when I was younger. I didn't realise how much you could learn from just a simple change in environment. With my handmade accessory manufacturing business Dee-Kaw-Zee (meaning large earrings in my native language Shona), I thrive on creativity and inspiration. In the earlier days of the accessory making craft I mostly relied on television, magazines and strangely enough, music for inspiration. Dreams also played a huge role in ideas coming to life. But travel, oh my, travel then sealed the deal for me.





To give you insight into how my love for design and creativity married with the new found romance with travel, I will tell you a story. In an unlikely turn of events some years ago, myself and two family members flew to Bangkok Thailand on holiday, without visas after having been advised by our travel agent that we could be issued visas at the airport in Bangkok. It turns out we needed to have acquired visas from our departure country and we were to be deported immediately! We prayed for an intervention and one came. The officer responsible for finding us flights to return home had a brain wave. We didn't need a visa to go to Malaysia where we could then go to the Thai embassy and apply for a visa and return to Thailand a few days later. Albeit unbudgeted for and unplanned, we scored a trip to a country none of us had ever been too!

Upon landing at the airport in Kuala Lumpur, the colour green was everywhere. It was distinct. The dense evergreen rainforest atmosphere stuck with me and has to this day remained my favourite design inspiration. That colour green plays a significant role in my creative work because it symbolises life, renewal and energy. The rich blend of religion from Muslim, to Buddhist to Hindu and a touch of Chinese heritage was evident in the various building structures and attire of the people we encountered. This inspired shapes, texture tones and the type of clothes that would complement the accessories I make.



The elaborate malls such as the those in Suria Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) and the Petronas Twin Towers all resonated with my design thinking, the architecture, the lights, the glasswork all screamed creativity and my pieces benefited from these sights that I saw. My mind and spirit began to awaken from this travel, showing me that nature and surroundings play a huge role in developing creative design.

The ensuing trip to Bangkok Thailand was no different. The rich culture, the modes of transportation, the fashion and diversity all reminded me that exposure is key.

Coming back home to Africa, I realised what a wealth we have in creative inspiration on this continent. My travels to Mulanje in Malawi, where there is a large and serene mountain as well as vast tea estates, brought on a different shade and element of green. Lake Malawi with its elements of fishery, sand and water, with things like shells that we actually collected and utilised in some of our jewellery pieces also stands out in my head.

Go up north to Uganda where again the colour green in a different shade surfaces with the massive plantain fields across the country, a crop grown to make their staple food called matoke. My home country Zimbabwe, rich in maize fields, tobacco fields, and cotton estates also brings colour and shape design to reality. The Eastern Highlands with its mountains and valleys, Victoria Falls with the smoke that thunders have all greatly inspired my creations.



In my various travels worldwide I have also collected items that have featured in some of our pieces. Stones, shells, beads, horns, animal hide, metal pieces, fabric and so many other elements that we have repurposed. My travels have made me realise the significance of nature to our existence, easily perceivable importance and inferred importance for some of us creatives.

It is important for my brand identity to preserve as much of the natural environment around us as is possible. At Dee-Kaw-Zee, we prioritise sustainable fashion. The use of upcycled, repurposed and reused materials is vital to us. When we utilise items from nature, we ensure that we are not affecting the natural habitat nor are we causing any harm to plant and animal life. The beauty I have encountered worldwide has had an immense impact and benefit to me and I wouldn't want to selfishly cause deprivation for future generations of God's majesty that I have had the privilege of experiencing.



I have learnt that getting out of one's comfort zone, seeing a different place, whether in your own country or abroad, opening the eyes to nature and surroundings as well as allowing ourselves to feed positively off of the grand world we have before us can not only soothe the soul, but depending on our mind set and view on life, we can create and thrive!

Takudzwa Chitsike

Takudzwa Chitsike is the Founder of Footprints Personal Image Services. She is also the Founder of Dee-Kaw-Zee (Pvt) Limited, a company that manufactures & distributes custom made jewellery and fashion accessories, where she serves as the Creative Director. A lawyer by profession, Takudzwa is a multi-award-winning entrepreneur who currently works for a blue-chip company in Harare Zimbabwe.

Connect with Taku on Instagram @takuChitsike and Dee-Kaw-Zee @deekawzee



*The Magnificent
Victoria Falls Awaits...*

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Culinary Escapades



Meet ‘The Black Chef’

KUDAKWASHE MAKONI

Kudakwashe Makoni or as he is popularly known, “The Black Chef” is one of Zimbabwe’s top chefs. He has taken the “Black Chef” name from being just a mere name to becoming a whole brand that’s synonymous with offering private and personal chef services as well as consultancy services for restaurants and other food service operations – in both pre-opening and post-opening phases!



He says he has been avidly passionate about cooking since the age 12, but his earliest culinary memories go back to when he was just 6, where he would make weekend breakfasts with his mom. After moving to the US for college and studying Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology and a second degree in Political Science, he decided to follow his passion. This came after a series of life changing events. He went on to pursue a Culinary Arts Management degree from the Culinary Institute of America (New York & California).

One of the things that has brought uniqueness and made the Black Chef's cooking palatable to a broader audience, is the fact that his culinary journey has allowed him to live and work all over the globe. Kuda's culinary expertise has taken him to countries like the US, Malaysia, UAE, Bahrain and Ghana. As a private chef, he has created a flair for bringing fusion cuisine into people's homes, and opts out of being the standard caterer to being a private and personal chef. Opportunities to travel and cook in Africa alone have been huge, and he has gone as far as Mexico to cook for high level entrepreneurs.





Creating special, bespoke, signature 4 course menus, characterised by an ambience and aesthetic that suits the discerning person, for the Black Chef, the same is also applicable to his understanding of different ways and methods of running businesses in varied economic environments.

This has helped with the consultancy side of his business. The same principles that are applied in these businesses when setting up kitchen and sometimes restaurant SOP's is very evident in places that he works too. He jokingly admits that this is how he 'test-runs or guinea pigs' new systems before or after he has put them in operation. He has set his vision on operating a full consultancy firm that will offer a myriad of in house services.

Currently based in Ghana, the Black Chef is working for one of Ghana's leading hospitality groups as a Group Executive Chef. He says for the future he has begun rebranding his private and personal chef service to cater for contemporary afro-fusion cuisine, celebrating the different cultures and regions of Africa. He will also be launching a gourmet spice & herb line – Aruma Spice Co.

Connect with the Black Chef
on Instagram @theblackchefzw

from the
**Black
Chef's
Kitchen**

Braised Red Wine Oxtail Potjie

*your
ingredients*

- 1kg fresh oxtail
- 4 slices of back bacon, diced
- ½ cup flour (you can season this with salt, pepper and steak spice)
- 1-liter beef stock
- 100g tomato paste or tomato paste
- 410g/1 can chopped tomato
- 4 bay leaf
- 1 bouquet garni (I made mine fresh with thyme, parsley & thyme)
- 2 large potatoes, cut into eighths
- 2 large onions (1 fine diced and the other coarsely chopped)
- 2 large carrots, chopped
- ½ cup frozen garden peas
- 200ml red wine
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons crushed garlic





*how to
make
the dish*

Dry oxtail with a paper towel. Place seasoned flour in a Ziplock bag, then add the Oxtail and shake to coat with flour. **1**

2 Heat the butter and olive oil in a heavy base pot (I used an enameled cast iron Dutch oven) and sauté bacon pieces, diced onions & garlic

Remove bacon, onions and garlic then add the oxtail to the pot and brown in the bacon fat. Return the bacon mixture and continue frying **3**

4 Pour you red wine and cook it through adding the bouquet garni, bay leaves, tomato paste, chopped tomatoes and beef stock.

Bring slowly to the boil on high heat for about 15 minutes. Reduce heat to medium and cover tightly with a lid and allow to cook undisturbed for 2-3 hours. **5**

6 30 minutes before serving, add the carrots, big chopped onions and potatoes - continue cooking slowly, without stirring. With 5 minutes remaining add the garden peas so they can have a bright fresh green color.



Serve with steamed rice or bread, sadza/pap/nshima or just some chunky torn pieces of french baguettes (you will need the bread either way for mopping through your plate. **7**

NB. If you want a thicker sauce, stir in some cornstarch mixed with cold water same time you add the peas!

DINING WITH A view of Gaborone



When travellers speak of Botswana, the narrative almost always highlights the wealth of adventure opportunities available in the Maun and the vast Okavango Delta. It's safari central over here, but Gaborone, Botswana's capital tells a different story. A very small and organic city that is not trying too hard to be the next Johannesburg or New York, experiencing Gaborone will still grant you many opportunities to experience the cosmopolitan side of the capital city of one of Africa's fastest growing economies.



While the locals aren't really avid party goers that fill the club scene, if you are looking for a chic place to chill out, enjoy a great dinner, drinks, desert and a stellar view with some family and friends, pop by Table50Two, located on the 28th floor of the majestic iTowers South. Famed for its claim to being the highest dining and nightlife venue in Botswana, guests can not only indulge in a selection of local, Asian and Western inspired tapas and dishes, but the views of Botswana's central business district will not disappoint, especially in the evenings.

But maybe embarking on a night out on the town isn't on the cards while in Gaborone, affectionately known as "Gabs" by the locals. Table50Two does well to offer a classy atmosphere for a business breakfast, corporate lunch or quiet dinner for the more relaxed patrons. So, if you should ever find yourself in Botswana's capital city for business or leisure, add Table50Two on your itinerary for a dining experience to relish. It's always a win to enjoy a hearty meal with a spectacular panoramic view.





ARUMA Spice Co.

A

AFRICA: A Continent of Flavor Collection

Artisanal Spice & Herb Blend • Natural & Organic • Hand-Selected & Mixed • Stone-Ground

Accra
Kelewele and
Orange Peel

Dakar
Jollof and
Cayenne Pepper

Joburg
Chakalaka and
Ginger Root

Lagos
Suya and
Mixed Herbs

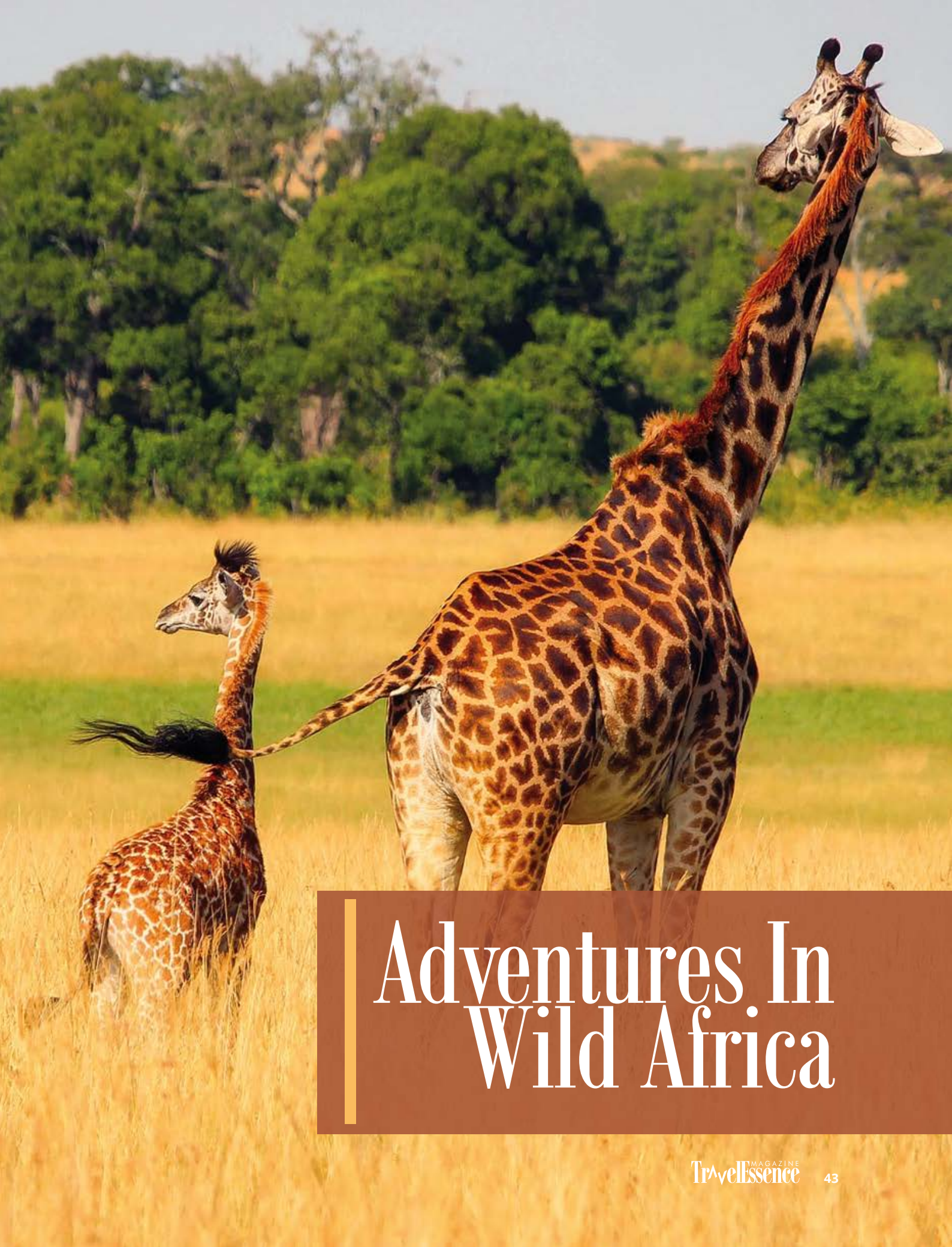
Harare
Mhiripiri and
Lemon Zest

Nairobi
Nyama Choma and
Dried Coriander

Algiers
Dry Harissa and
Black Pepper

Marrakech
Tagine and
Za'atar Powder

Tunis
Ras el Hanout and
Chili Powder



Adventures In Wild Africa



Top 10 things to do in Malawi

Malawi is a relatively unknown African country, landlocked between Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania, with a third of the land mass is covered in water! Known locally as the warm heart of Africa, Malawi boasts its friendly locals, beautiful lake Malawi and stunning landscapes. The real charm of Malawi is despite its small size, there is an abundance of activities to do.

From the famous shores of the lake of stars to the ever increasing wildlife reserves where you can head out on safari, to the brilliant hiking routes and tasty tea trails, there's something to excite anyone looking to enjoy an epic excursion across this little gem of a nation. So whenever next you are looking for an adventure away from the more renowned African countries, check out below, just a few of what Malawi has on offer in what we consider our top 10!



2. TAKE A BOAT SAFARI ON THE SHIRE RIVER

Liwonde National Park is one of the most up and coming parks in Africa. Having had huge conservational success with African Park's custodianship, Malawi is one of the few African countries to say they are having an increase in their number of rhinos and a decrease in poaching. With 2 of the reserves now with the big 5 and the numbers of the animals ever increasing, it is the perfect place for the avid safari-goer. The real draw of Liwonde is the diverse ways in which one can get close to the animals. There is nothing quite as relaxing as gently floating up to a large herd of elephant as they bathe in the river, cooling off for the day, or watching as the rapidly multiplying cheetah come down for a drink. The bird life is also unparalleled by the water and it's the best way to see the animals in peace and quiet of their environment as they go about their day.



2. SNORKEL IN LAKE MALAWI

The crystal clear waters of Lake Malawi offer a huge range of colourful endemic cichlid fish. Often considered a beach destination, thanks to the white sandy shores and blue waters of the lake, Lake Malawi is a great place to explore underwater. Either with a mask or you can scuba dive, the lake has a huge amount of marine life from the fish to the otters, crabs and sea birds. Come on out to Lake Malawi to channel your inner mermaid and get to exploring!



3. CLIMB MOUNT MULANJE

Malawi's answer to Kilimanjaro without the crowds, Mulanje is 3,002 meters high and a fraction of the price to access of Mount Kili! Take 3 nights to summit the peak and enjoy the breathtaking landscapes of Malawi sprawled out beneath you. With several mountain huts along the way you can take a helpful guide along with you to show you all the best spots and of course, a few porters to help carry your things. A climb up the scenic Mount Mulanje is a beautiful and challenging way to see Malawi's most famous mountain.

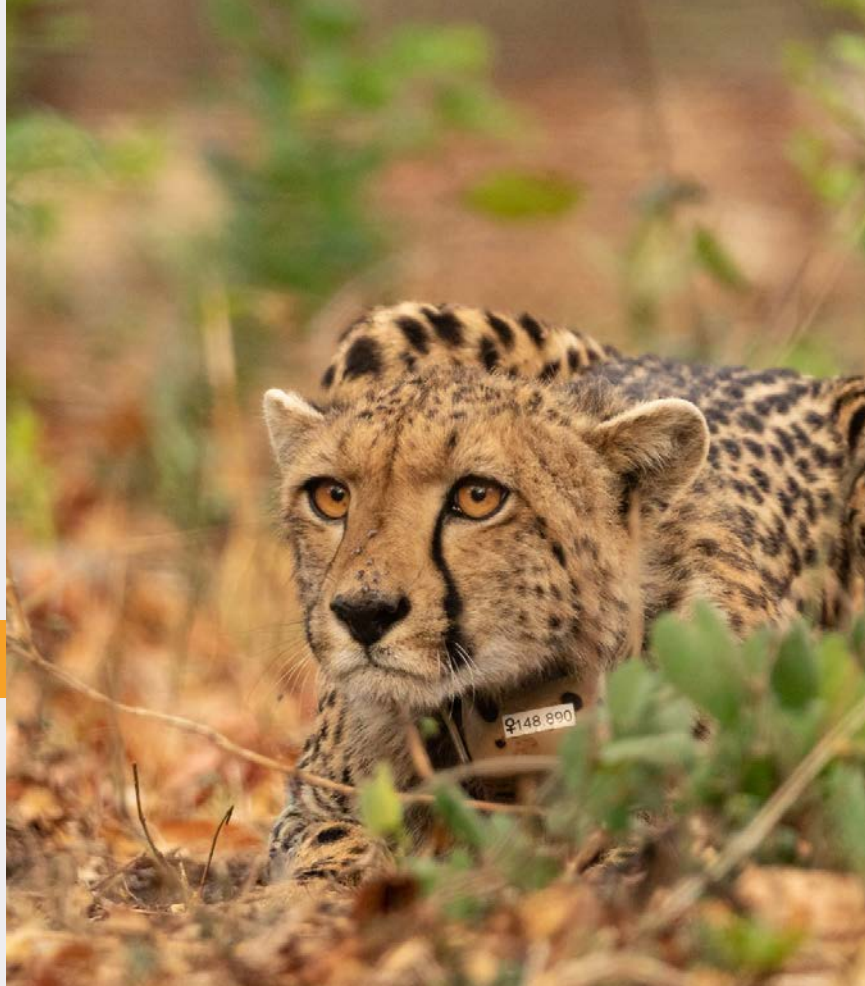
4. TEA TASTING

Did you know that one of Malawi's biggest exports is tea? The southern regions are incredibly fertile and so tea leaves are grown across the mountains here. Take a trip down and taste the huge variety of teas made here, watch tea pickers as they pick the precious leaves and then participate in an educational tour of the factories where they are dried and transformed. You can also taste some of the local coffee if tea isn't your thing or even a tea inspired cocktail!



5. MEET THE CHEETAH AT MAJETE WILDLIFE RESERVE

African Parks are offering the unique opportunity to track these majestic creatures on foot, using telemetry. Once you find them you will observe and note their behavior before having a beautiful bush breakfast to go over your experience and what you have seen.



6. TRADITIONAL DHOW CRUISE AT CAPE MACLEAR

The sunsets on the lake are truly breath-taking and they never get old. One way to enjoy it is a sunset dhow cruise at Pumulani, Cape Maclear. Enjoy the traditional dhow cruise around the pristine waters, watch as the sun heads down over the lake, and the lights on the water come alive, your signal that the fishermen are heading out for their evening catch. Known as the 'Lake of Stars' the lake is lit up from the lights on the fisherman dug-out canoes. Seeing these lights is truly magical and makes for a memorable experience.





7. VISIT THE CATHEDRAL ON LIKOMA ISLAND

Once thought to be the hub of the missionaries, St Peter's Cathedral is the same size as St Paul's in London. This incredible piece of architecture also acts as the host to national choir competitions. If there is one way to feel Africa in your bones, it's to have it vibrate through your ears as a church choir sings!

8. VISIT THE CHONGONI ROCK ART

Whilst you are near Dedza you might as well head to the Chongoni Rock Art as the sites are near the mountainous region of Dedza. Reported to be the densest cluster of rock art in Central Africa, there are 127 sites identified on the plateau. The rock art and paintings depict the farming community of the late stone age. It is celebrated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the artwork symbolises rituals and ceremonies of the Chewa community.





9. TAKE A COOKING CLASS AT KUMBALI COUNTRY LODGE

Malawi cuisine is undoubtedly be tasty, wholesome and unique. From the special chambo fish fresh from the lake to the staple Nsima, there are many exciting, organic flavours to try your hand at. Internationally trained Chef Jess will take you through the recipes before you enjoy your spoils for dinner.

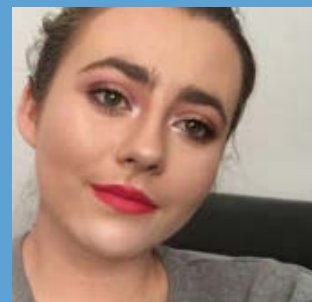
10. FLY OVER LIWONDE IN A HELICOPTER

You can now take to the skies over Liwonde National Park, whilst your pilot tells you a little about the history of the park while showing you the animals dotted across the landscape. Exciting and educational is a great way to describe the experience, culture and conservation of the park whilst hopefully getting some great sightings. Look out for the park's numerous elephant herds and crashes of black rhino!



About the Contributor

Chloe McCormack has lived and worked in Malawi for a ground operator for the last 3 years. Having worked in the safari industry for almost 10 years and initially trained as a safari guide, her love of nature led her to Malawi to explore the area for clients. Falling in love with the up and coming destination, she packed her bags and moved across in order to sell Malawi to the rest of the world. The huge range of activities suited her endless enthusiasm and she now happily calls Lilongwe home.



Explore Zimbabwe with Tiritose Sustainable Travel

Ethical Volunteering, Professionally Rewarding Internships & Studying Abroad with Tiritose Sustainable Travel



“As the first and only travel company in Zimbabwe to receive accreditation and certification from Travelife & Fair-Trade Tourism, we are proud pioneers of responsible travel in Africa.”

Wesley Maraire

Chief Worker Bee at Tiritose Sustainable Travel



Sustainable travel has become a growing trend around the world, with countries taking measures to ensure that the tourism industry continues to grow without having an adverse effect on their natural sites. This is also true for travel across Africa's vast and diverse landscapes, especially given that many tourists enjoy the up close and personal experiences the continent has on offer.

While people may enjoy adventure excursions such as going on safari, we also know such experiences to leave a negative effect on the environment. That is why innovative companies such as Tiritose are making their mark in promoting sustainable practices and conservation practices, especially as it relates to Zimbabwe's travel and tourism landscape. Tiritose Sustainable Travel is the leading responsible travel provider in Zimbabwe, facilitating ethical volunteering,

professionally rewarding internships & study abroad opportunities for students and youth from around the world.

Tiritose, which means 'we are together' in the Shona language of Zimbabwe, started out as a non-profit organisation working on the frontlines of improving healthcare, conservation and business practices in Zimbabwe. Tiritose continued to evolve, creating the volunteering program as an enterprising effort aiming to facilitate fundraising for more of their non-profit work.

Tiritose complies with regulations of biodiversity, environment & wildlife issues, also adhering to the codes of conduct of various fulfilment partners. The organisation also complies with the regulations of the UN-supported Global Sustainable Tourism Council Criteria for travel companies.



Matching Passion with Purpose

In order to fulfil their vision, Tiritose Sustainable Travel has gone about entering into agreements with local Zimbabwean organisations that in certain instances, lack the capacity to employ permanent staff. Volunteers then work at such organisations, with a scope for permanent employment placement should vacancies arise.

The greatest advantage for such an arrangement is that the volunteers and partnering organisations are able to share ideas on how to further fulfil the objectives of their initiatives and sustainable practices at hand, while simultaneously creating memories that last a lifetime for all parties involved.

True to form, and in alignment with Tiritose's operational ethos, few opportunities rival those of travelling to a new destination to immerse yourself in the culture, hearts and minds of the locals like working side by side with them, with the aim to bring long-term solutions to environmental and community related challenges. Tiritose Sustainable Travel provides a wide array of volunteer and internship programs that promote Animal Rescue, Wildlife Conservation as well as Medical and Early Childhood Development.

What's cool about Tiritose Sustainable Travel? Well, the organisation offers interactive and educational programs that really speak to the hearts of travellers looking to make a difference with each footprint...

Animal Reserve & Rehabilitation Volunteer Program

This program allows volunteers to live and work in an animal sanctuary, carrying out activities that heal and rehabilitate both domestic and wild animals. Volunteers take part in a weekly community veterinary treatment, providing rabies vaccinations free of charge to the surrounding community. Vet and pre-vet students are given the opportunity to work with the resident vet and private clinic.

Wildlife, Environment Conservation Volunteer Program

A lot of animals are in danger of extinction, the rhino being one of the animals with the biggest threat, owing to the reduction in numbers over the years due to poaching. The conservancy is primarily a rhino and sable breeding sanctuary and has released several rhinos into their original habitat on the Zambezi escarpment. A significant part of this project is also community outreach, combining conservation education with health-care improvement programmes.

Wildlife-Human Conflict Management

The wildlife-human conflict programme presents volunteers with a unique opportunity to combine community work with wildlife and environmental conservation. It is Tiritose's flagship programme, with an added benefit of living in the iconic Kariba resort town; the only place where humans and wildlife live together with no artificial boundaries.

“I would encourage anyone planning to lead any study abroad programme to come visit Zimbabwe and find out what all there is to see. Any problems you face as a faculty leader, everyone here is there to help – We are very excited to continue to work with Tiritose next year...”

Jan Brooks

Lecturer: University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign – College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences.



A Day in the Life of a Volunteer

Volunteers typically work Monday to Thursday and often have three-day weekends, where Tiritose Sustainable Travel takes them to visit adventure, cultural and historical sites around the country, including white water rafting on the mighty Zambezi river; UNESCO Heritage Sites like the Great Zimbabwe Monument or the picturesque Eastern Highlands.

Each program has a different daily schedule. The volunteers start their day early, interacting

with the wild animals; feeding and tracking wildlife as well as removing snares. The volunteers then enjoy some breakfast, followed by facility maintenance and engaging with the community. Lunch is then served with some fun activities followed by outreach programs. The day ends with volunteers interacting with each and relaxing as they enjoy the evening.

Tiritose Sustainable Travel received endorsement from the national Ministry of Higher & Tertiary Education, Science & Technology Development as the third-party provider of international exchange, facilitating exchanges for, and on behalf of institutions of higher learning in Zimbabwe.

Through the study abroad programme, students studying at institutions around the world are able to enrol at a Zimbabwean institution for a semester or for a year, whilst taking credit-bearing courses. Over the last few years, the organisation has hosted students from Dirham University & University of Yorke in the United Kingdom, Ohio State University, Princeton University & University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the United States among others.

Tiritose Sustainable Travel commands huge respect among colleges & universities as the best on-the-ground study abroad partner. Their 9.37 score on reputable study abroad aggregator sites like goabroad.com are testament to this fact.

Individuals and groups are invited to come explore educational tours that last between two to eight weeks, covering fields such as medicine, environment, conservation, business management and economics. Tiritose Sustainable Travel provides pre-departure and in-country orientation, accommodation, field trips and other excursions. So come, explore Zimbabwe with Tiritose!



For more information about Tiritose Sustainable Travel, international volunteering, internships and study abroad in Zimbabwe, please visit their website: www.tiritose.com. You can also find information on the charity work Tiritose Trust is involved with here: www.tiritose.org.

Victoria Falls Safari Lodge

**A SAVANNAH
EXPERIENCE
AT ITS BEST**



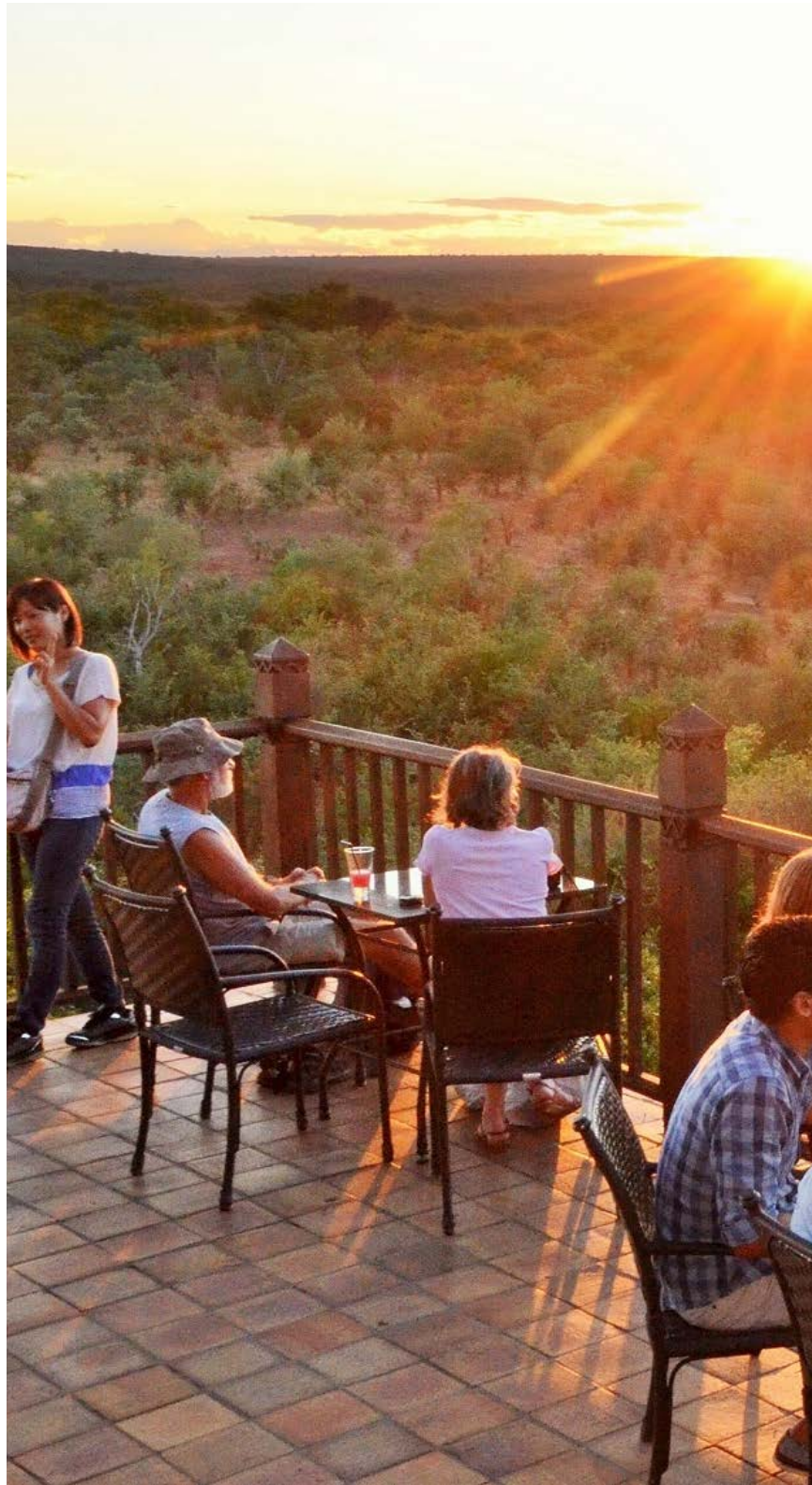


Daylight comes early in Africa, so a guest may awake from a refreshing night's sleep to the sound of birds chirping, a squirrel scuttling across their private balcony or a bushbuck grazing in the bushes below.

These calming sounds of nature coming alive can be enjoyed from the privacy of your balcony with a coffee in hand.

The mesmerising view of bush stretching to the horizon can also be soaked in over breakfast at MaKuwa-Kuwa Restaurant where favourites include the 'Livukile' breakfast of soft poached eggs on toasted brown bread, honey glazed ham, grilled tomato and hollandaise sauce.

On your way to or from breakfast you may enjoy the sight of a young warthog family roaming the grounds. It is now time to depart on a guided tour of the Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.





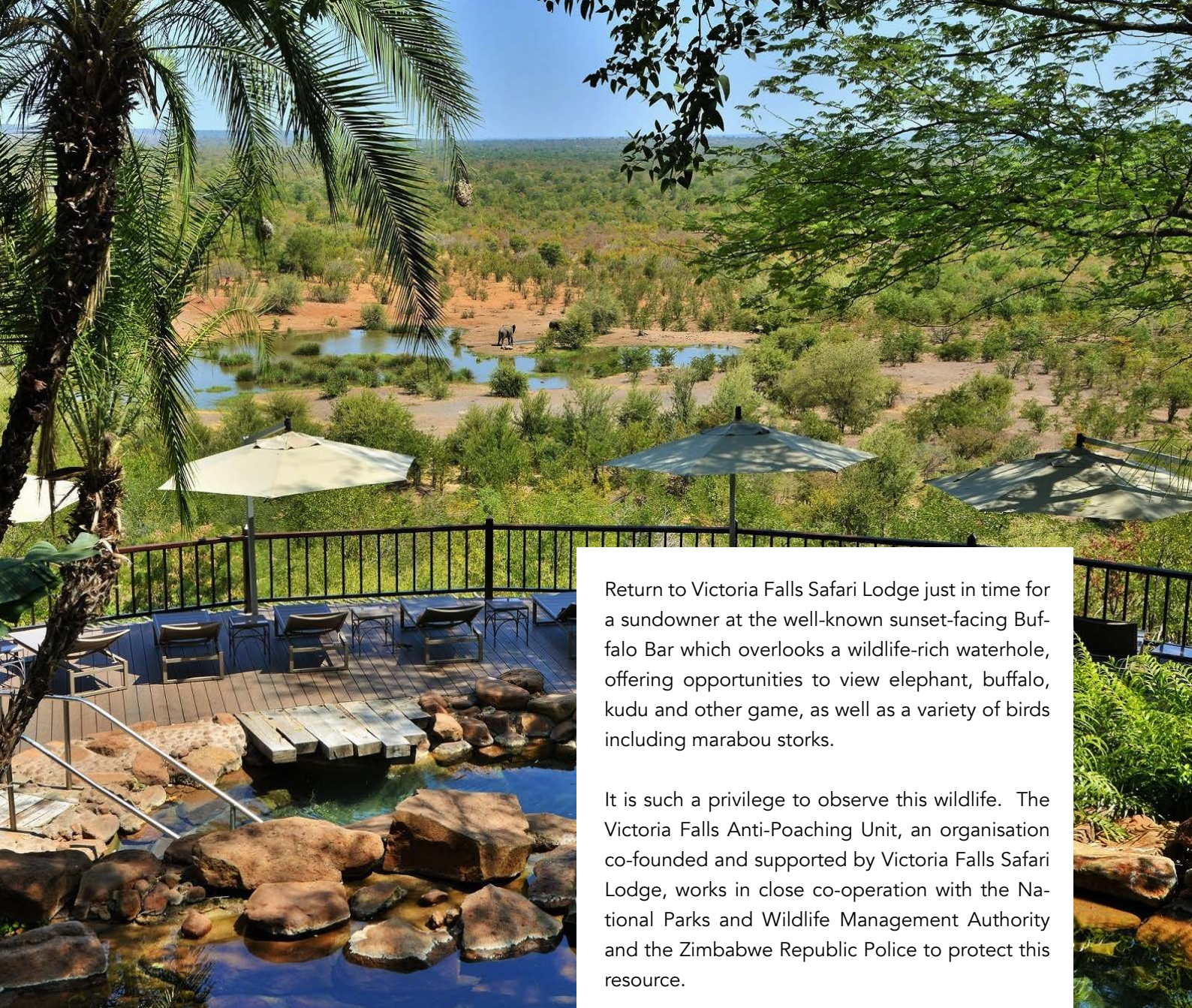


You will be awed by the sheer beauty of the largest curtain of falling water in the world, and your guide, Zulu, will enthral you with the history of the Falls, as well as detailing the flora, fauna and other points of interest.

After your visit to the Falls enjoy a leisurely wander around the town, exploring the craft markets or return to Victoria Falls Safari Lodge and relax at the pool deck. At 1pm make your way below the Buffalo Bar viewing deck to take part in the Vulture Culture Experience.

Here you will witness the spectacular sight of hundreds of vultures swooping down and feeding on meat trimmings and bones from the on-site restaurants. This supplementary feeding programme aids the survival of these remarkable but endangered birds.

Next is lunch at the Buffalo Bar where you may choose from the likes of a safari chicken and mushroom pot pie, the popular lodge burger or a shrimp quesadilla. You will be greeted by a warm, smiling waiter reflecting the nature of the people of Zimbabwe.



\$1 from every dish sold on this menu is donated to vulture conservation, so you'll be helping a very worthwhile cause at the same time. You'll notice no plastic water bottles anywhere – these were eliminated last year as part of our pledge to be free of single-use plastic by 2021 to help conserve our environment.

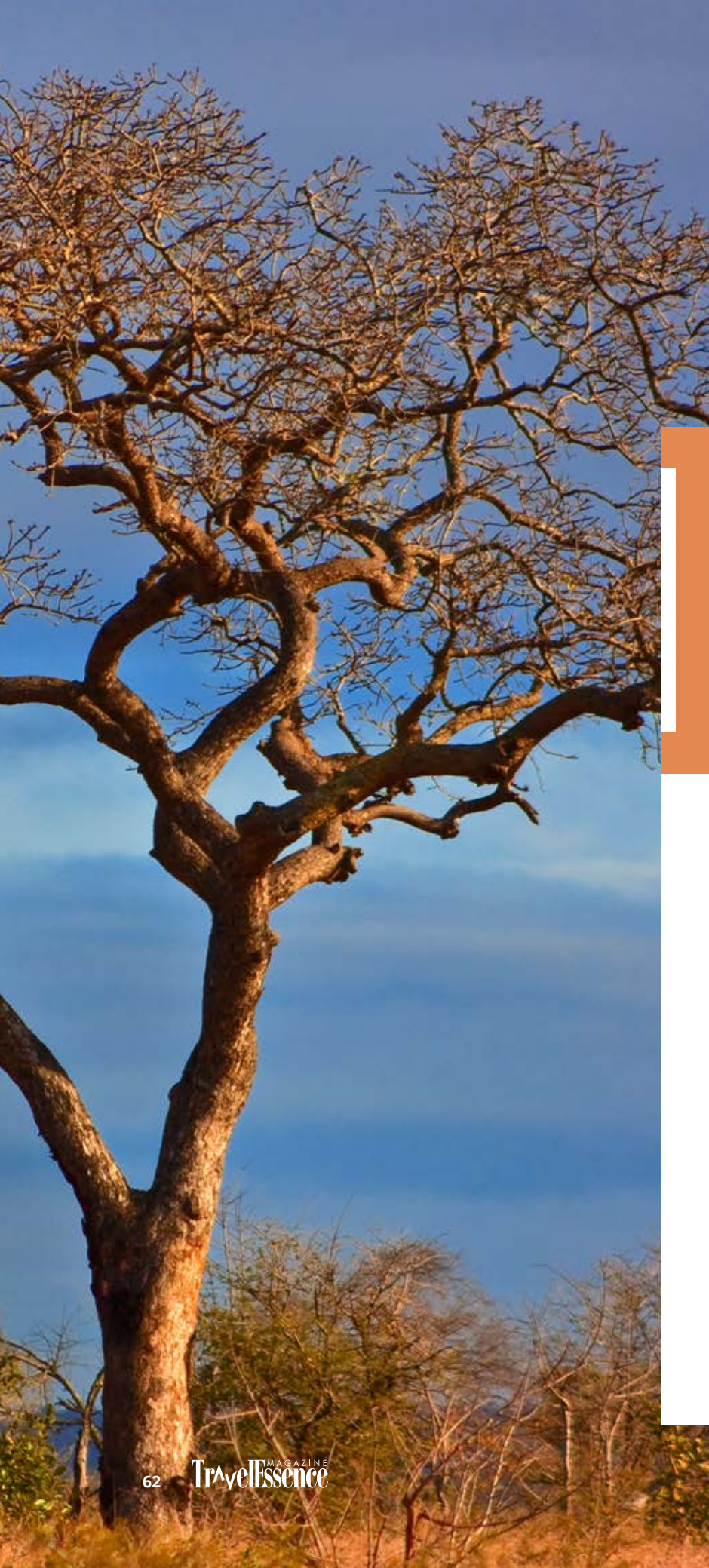
This afternoon choose from an array of activities on offer in Victoria Falls from gorge swinging, zip lining and a helicopter flight over the Falls.

Return to Victoria Falls Safari Lodge just in time for a sundowner at the well-known sunset-facing Buffalo Bar which overlooks a wildlife-rich waterhole, offering opportunities to view elephant, buffalo, kudu and other game, as well as a variety of birds including marabou storks.

It is such a privilege to observe this wildlife. The Victoria Falls Anti-Poaching Unit, an organisation co-founded and supported by Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, works in close co-operation with the National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and the Zimbabwe Republic Police to protect this resource.

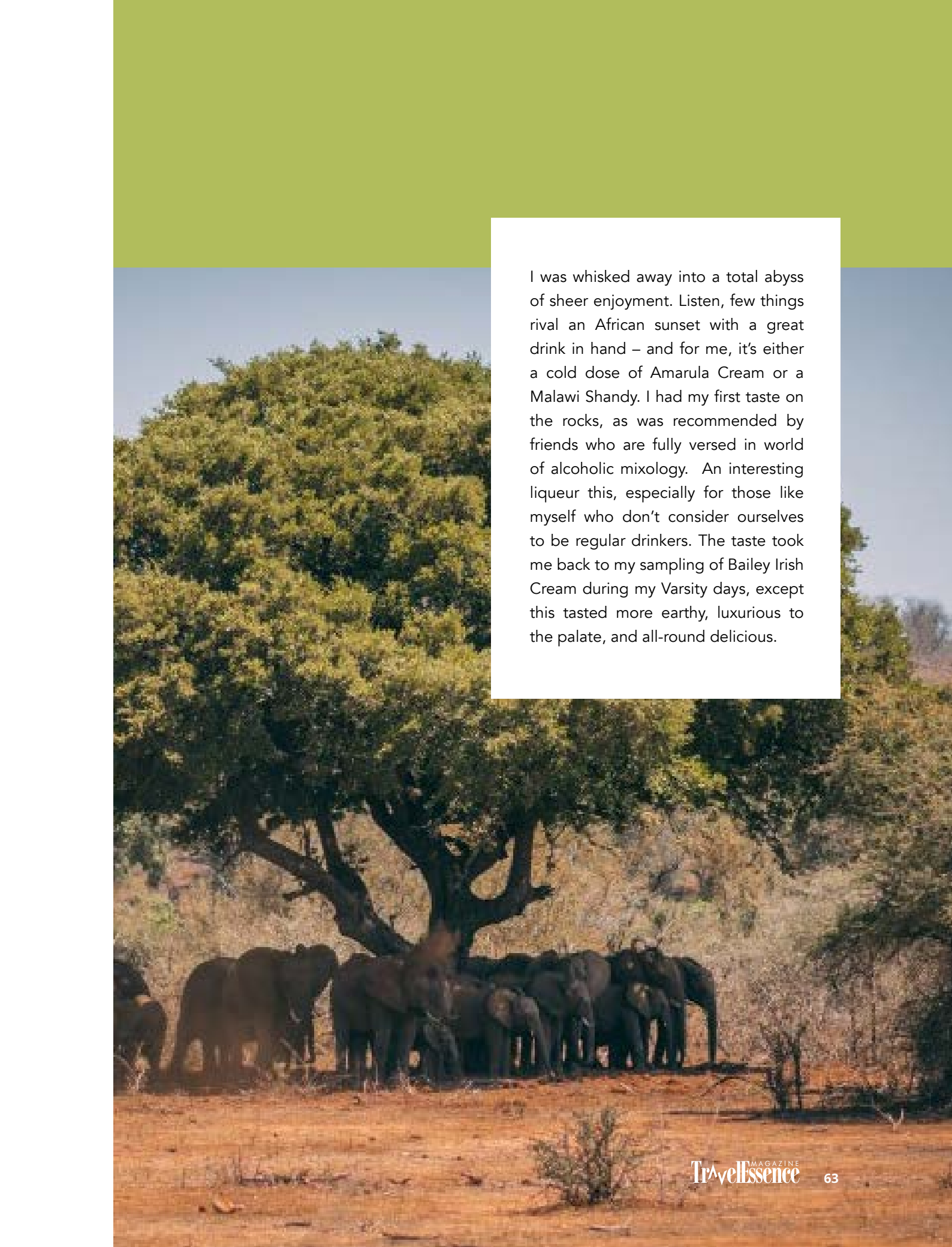
The Buffalo Bar is a favourite sundowner spot for guests and locals alike.

Once the sun has slipped over the horizon signalling the end of another memorable day in Africa choose between dinner at MaKuwa-Kuwa Restaurant, where dishes such as slow cooked coffee beef short rib or spicy okra masala will tantalise the taste buds or catch a courtesy shuttle to the nearby Boma – Dinner & Drum Show, a legendary “must-do” dining and entertainment experience for an evening of foot-stomping fun.

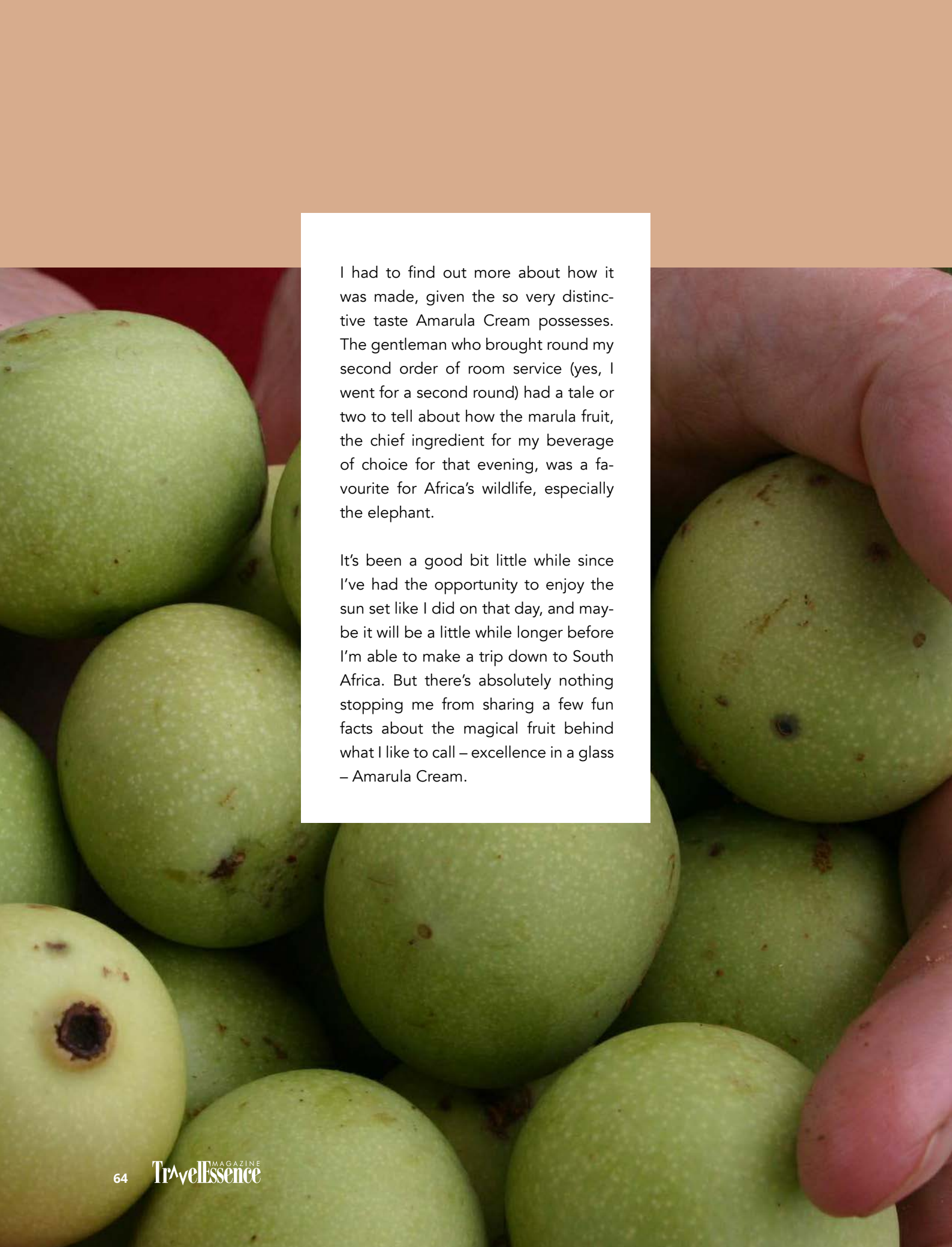


Hidden Secrets of the Marula Tree

My first sip of the famous Amarula Cream liqueur came after a long day of sight-seeing on one of my trips to South Africa. I wanted to watch the sun set; something that comes recommended for anyone taking in the scenery and sounds of Africa's savannah. And so, I perched myself on the balcony of my hotel room, taking in the sun's rays as they struck my face, and the breathtaking views of the golf course and swimming pools below. This was going to be one of those work trips that I would at least try to squeeze in some downtime to do absolutely nothing but be present in the moments that came between my very hectic schedule.

A herd of elephants is gathered under a large, spreading tree in a savanna landscape. The elephants are of various sizes, including several adults and a few calves. They are standing on a dry, reddish-brown ground. The background shows a mix of green and brown trees and bushes under a clear blue sky. The top of the page has a solid green header.

I was whisked away into a total abyss of sheer enjoyment. Listen, few things rival an African sunset with a great drink in hand – and for me, it's either a cold dose of Amarula Cream or a Malawi Shandy. I had my first taste on the rocks, as was recommended by friends who are fully versed in world of alcoholic mixology. An interesting liqueur this, especially for those like myself who don't consider ourselves to be regular drinkers. The taste took me back to my sampling of Bailey Irish Cream during my Varsity days, except this tasted more earthy, luxurious to the palate, and all-round delicious.



I had to find out more about how it was made, given the so very distinctive taste Amarula Cream possesses. The gentleman who brought round my second order of room service (yes, I went for a second round) had a tale or two to tell about how the marula fruit, the chief ingredient for my beverage of choice for that evening, was a favourite for Africa's wildlife, especially the elephant.

It's been a good bit little while since I've had the opportunity to enjoy the sun set like I did on that day, and maybe it will be a little while longer before I'm able to make a trip down to South Africa. But there's absolutely nothing stopping me from sharing a few fun facts about the magical fruit behind what I like to call – excellence in a glass – Amarula Cream.

It's unlikely you'll find the marula in the fruit and veggie section on your next store run, but you can indulge in five interesting facts that may convince you to pick yourself a bottle off the shelf the next time you are in a duty-free liqueur store at the airport or in your neighbourhood. I can assure you; this will likely be much easier than embarking on a fruit hunting excursion.



1 The marula tree and its fruit are found in Sub-Saharan Africa, and only the female tree produces the fruit. Yes, you read right. The marula tree is a dioecious tree, meaning there are girl-trees and boy-trees. While the male trees bloom, the female trees produce the dream. Need I say more...

3 A very difficult source of Vitamin C to find given how the tree only grows wild in Africa, but when you do get your hands on one, a single marula fruit carries 8 times the amount of Vitamin C in an orange! Also, it has been credited for its preventative properties where cancer and heart disease are concerned because of its richness in oleic acids and oxidants. This little fruit has huge benefits for the body as much as it is delicious.

2 Marula fruits are green in colour before ripening, largely in the first quarter of each year. When ripe, marula fruits are golden ovals, with each healthy tree estimated to produce close to 500kgs of the fruit. Note though, that it takes close to 200 fruits to produce a liter of marula wine. That's a lot! Wonder how many fruits go into a bottle of Amarula Cream?!

4 Also, edible are the seeds, which are found inside the small 'stone' inside the fruit., which are rich in protein, mineral content such as iron, phosphorus, copper, zinc and magnesium. It's no wonder oils extracted from marula fruits are used in the manufacture of hair and skin nourishing products.

5 If one tree can produce close to half a tonne of fruit, think of how many desserts you can get from that! Yes, the marula fruit's rich taste and aroma makes for delectable desserts like South Africa's favourite – malva pudding. Add a shot to your coffee and that will have you sorted as a night cap too!



Few liqueurs bring warmth to my palate, but Amarula Cream ticks all the boxes. Whether it's a movie night at home or like me, watching the sun set while taking in a breathtaking scenery, I have to say, enjoying a glass is a guaranteed way to indulge yourself with the secrets of the marula tree.





Botswana welcomes you



Welcome to a snippet of beautiful Botswana, a small country in the Southern part of Africa, with a population of a little over 2 million inhabitants, and incredible stories to share through its warm and welcoming people. Our history is long as much as it is intriguing, with our nation highly regarded as a peaceful and democratic state since attaining its independence in 1966 from being a British protectorate.

When you visit Botswana, the first word you'll hear being said with every interaction is 'Dumela', which literally means hello. Batswana are warm and they take respect of their elders very seriously. This too is reflected in our greetings and core values. With a hearty 'Dumela Mma' (Hello Ma'am) or 'Dumela Rra' (Hello Sir), you'll for sure get a glimpse into the welcoming spirit of our people.



With the current situation affecting the world at large, communities across Botswana are having to adapt to the changes that come with reduced inbound tourism numbers. You see, visitation from international travellers is a pretty big deal for locals, as sustainable tourism has long been viewed by industry stakeholders as a focus area and key contributor to Botswana's collective tourism product offering. Because we believe in a model that organically feeds into our people within the value chain, that is, real people on the ground whose livelihoods also depend on support from overseas travellers, as a nation, we truly value each tourist that decides to visit Botswana for leisure or business.

When tourists buy our baskets, they are effectively putting food on the table for a family in the remotest parts of Botswana. When we welcome backpackers into our communities, and they proceed to book a creative lesson hosted by the locals in the form of learning pottery, how to dance, how to build a mud hut house, milk a goat; or simply go hiking with the locals, on a village tour on a bicycle or come spend one night in a small village; such activities help the local economies run, thereby contributing to the livelihoods of Botswana communities.



I started my business on account of my desire to contribute to Botswana's growing tourism landscape, while sharing part of our culture and value system with inhabitants of the world beyond our borders. Our packages are experiential and designed to showcase the best of Botswana through the eyes of everyday people. One of the things I most enjoy when I welcome clients to Botswana, is the opportunity to take them across Botswana through the lens of my childhood.

I love to share with our guests a perspective of life as an African woman born and raised in Botswana, and naturally, the beauty of being a black woman running a tourism company that caters to the needs of communities at grassroots levels. Happy Soul Adventures is purely about showcasing authentic Botswana, our people and our culture, through interactive activities that involve the people living in communities across the country.

The pure and authentic Africa story awaits you through Happy Soul Adventures. And I can't wait to host you! My Botswana awaits you!





Cynthia Botshelo Mothelesi

Cynthia Botshelo Mothelesi is the Founder and owner of Happy Soul Adventures, a local tourism company that seeks to showcase the best of Botswana and part of Africa through the eyes of locals. Cynthia is also the proud owner of @Mmomontle, a platform that supports homegrown business in Botswana. To learn more about experiences available during your next trip to Botswana, follow Happy Soul Adventures under the same handle.





From Coast to Coast: Africa's favourite beaches

Who doesn't love a beachfront vacation; colorful drinks with a little umbrella floating on some ice, fresh seafood to embellish and just the enjoyment of moments far removed from whatever concrete jungle we've had to leave to disconnect from the hustle and bustle that is life?

Whether you are looking for an uninterrupted panoramic view of the sea on the backdrop of an undisturbed shore like the beaches of Bazaruto

in Mozambique, or much prefer the South Beach Miami-like, cosmopolitan nature of Cape Town's Camps Bay in South Africa; one thing's for sure, when the tide is warm and we are in need of a little R&R, Africa boasts some pristine beaches you can take advantage of pretty much year-round. So, without further ado, check out our selection of 10 favourite beaches, because if it's an ocean-side holiday you are looking for, Africa's got you covered from coast to coast!

Belle Mare – East Coast Mauritius

Volcanic mountain backdrops, remnants of the British colonialism as evidenced in some of the island of Mauritius' buildings, Indian temples, and the abundance of flora in botanical gardens that dot the island. Yes, Mauritius as a whole is idyllic as much as it is an answered prayer if you are looking for a little respite from the juggling that comes with living your



day-to-day, vacation-free life. Belle Mare on the east coast, boasts championship golf courses, luxury hotels, family-friendly aquatic activities and an opportunity to go hiking up the mountains for the adventure-curious wanderlust.

Nungwi, Zanzibar – Tanzania

Zanzibar, a famed favourite for lovers and friends alike because of the location's rich history and pristine beaches, much to the pleasure of those looking for a few days of relaxation, touring walks or taking on the seas for snorkeling or surfing. There are plenty of grand hotels for those travellers looking for a more high-end experience, while backpackers can put their heads on the beds of any one of the available lodges. The scenery is all round magnificent, undoubtedly making for a perfect beach getaway under the African sun.





Sahl Hasheesh Beach, Hurghada – Egypt

With plenty of hotels to choose from and lots of Arabesque appeal from the architecture on show, Hurghada has garnered acclaim as the fastest growing tourism development on the Red Sea coast. While the sands may feel a tad gritty for some, especially when pitted against other beaches across Africa, Sahl Hasheesh Beach

does still offer plenty of activities for holiday makers to enjoy beyond taking a dip at sea, such as taking a trip to Mini Egypt, a park with replicas of Egypt's iconic landmarks, enjoy a safari on camel back or quad bikes, or take a stroll through old town Sahl Hasheesh.



Camps Bay – South Africa

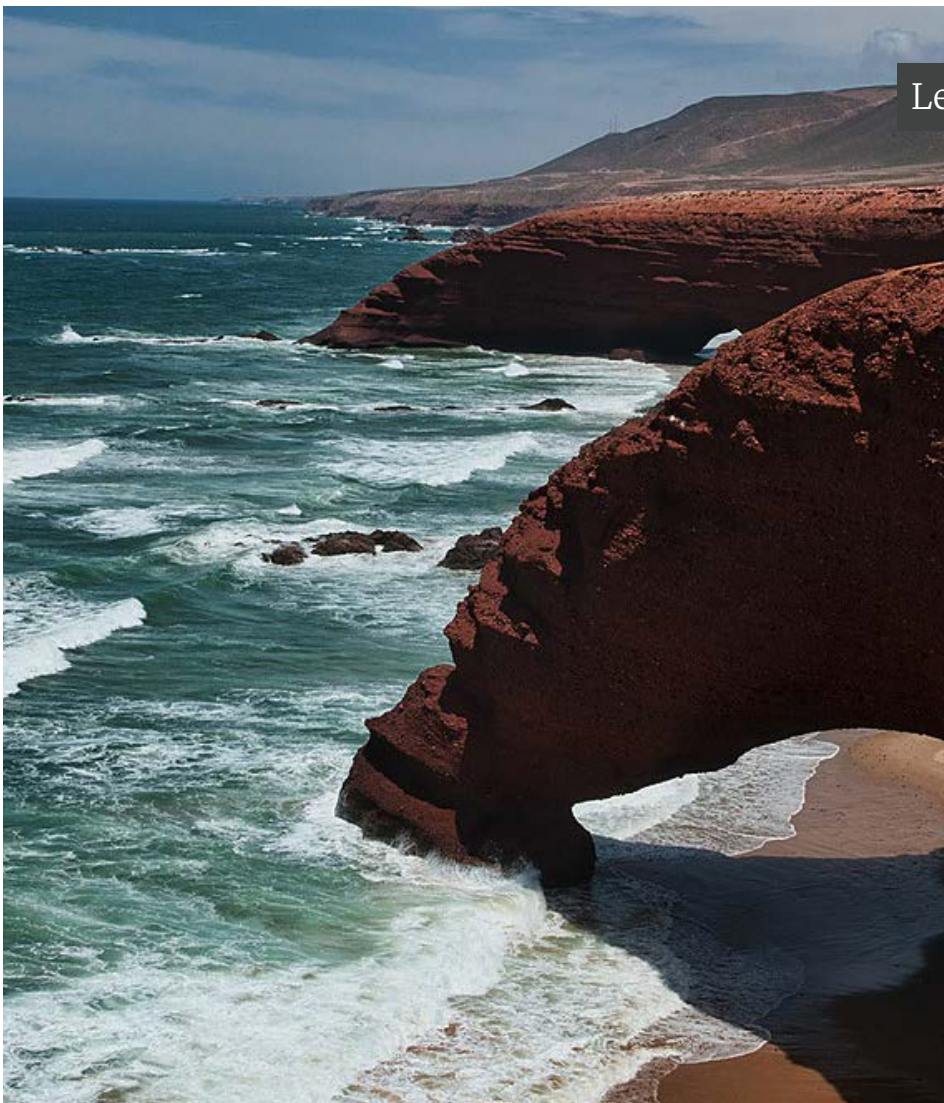
Think of a South Beach Miami vibe, enveloped by the majestic natural backdrop of the Twelve Apostles mountains. With countless posh restaurants, eclectic cafes, cocktail bars with views to swoon over, Camps Bay makes for a great destination to people watch while enjoying the culture

and activity of upmarket Cape Town. It can get a little windy, but this shouldn't deter you! There's simply just too much excitement to pass up with a trip to Cape Town, and so much to experience in this cosmopolitan little enclave that is Camps Bay, especially if you are on a trip with friends or your personal person!



Swakopmund – Namibia

This coastal town's German influences are so very visible, making for an interesting contrast between the European style colonial architecture and the Namib Desert's sand dunes nearby. Namibia's largest coastal town is indeed a picturesque destination for all who would like to infuse some rest with a little lesson in colonial history.



Legzira, Sidi Ifni – Morocco

If you are looking for a destination that not only showcases the surreal blues of the ocean, but simultaneously boasts epic displays of nature's geographic process, be sure to check out Morocco's Atlantic coastline. There you'll find Legzira Beach, known for its beautiful yet imposing red sandstone archways and cliffs. Ever heard of jewellery made by the Berber people of North Africa? Well, a short drive to the town of Tiznit after your beach escapades will give you an opportunity to get your hands on a few unique pieces!



Diani Beach – Kenya

To call it magical is an understatement. Soft white sands and clear azure waters welcome tourists to one of Kenya's prolific beaches, one which boasts a wide variety of family friendly adventure and sporting activities. With so many al fresco dining spots to choose from and of course, 5 star hotels and spectacular lodges to call home for a few days, Kenya doesn't disappoint as that one destination where you can enjoy both the sea and wildlife encounters by going on safari in-land.



Santa Monica, Boa Vista – Cape Verde

Located in the southwestern part of the island of Boa Vista in Cape Verde, Santa Monica Beach welcomes guests to a distinctive showcase of the sea's impact against the rocky shore. One gets the sense that the 22km long beach is yet to be tainted by development and commercialisation, with plenty of natural scenery to take in, making it an idyllic beach to enjoy a quite stroll.



Praia de Bazaruto – Mozambique

Known for unspoilt landscapes, a wealth of ecological discoveries, stunning coral reefs and sheer solitude on offer, Bazaruto is a haven for snorkellers, deep sea divers, parasailers and kayakers. But wait, that's not all. Maybe going out to sea isn't your thing. With 6 is-

lands to explore on the Bazaruto Archipelago, this destination makes for the perfect confluence of flora, fauna, sand dunes, wetlands, inland lakes and opulence, especially when you stay at any one of the islands' 5-star hotels.

Last from our picks, but certainly not the least, and far from the madding crowd of Seychelles' extraordinary beaches, lies Anse Soleil. A stunning bay known for its crystal clear, turquoise blue waters, and rocks that dot spectacularly white sands, Anse Soleil is a perfectly picturesque tropical destination, and an invitation to anyone looking for a relaxed island getaway.



Anse Soleil, Mahe – Seychelles

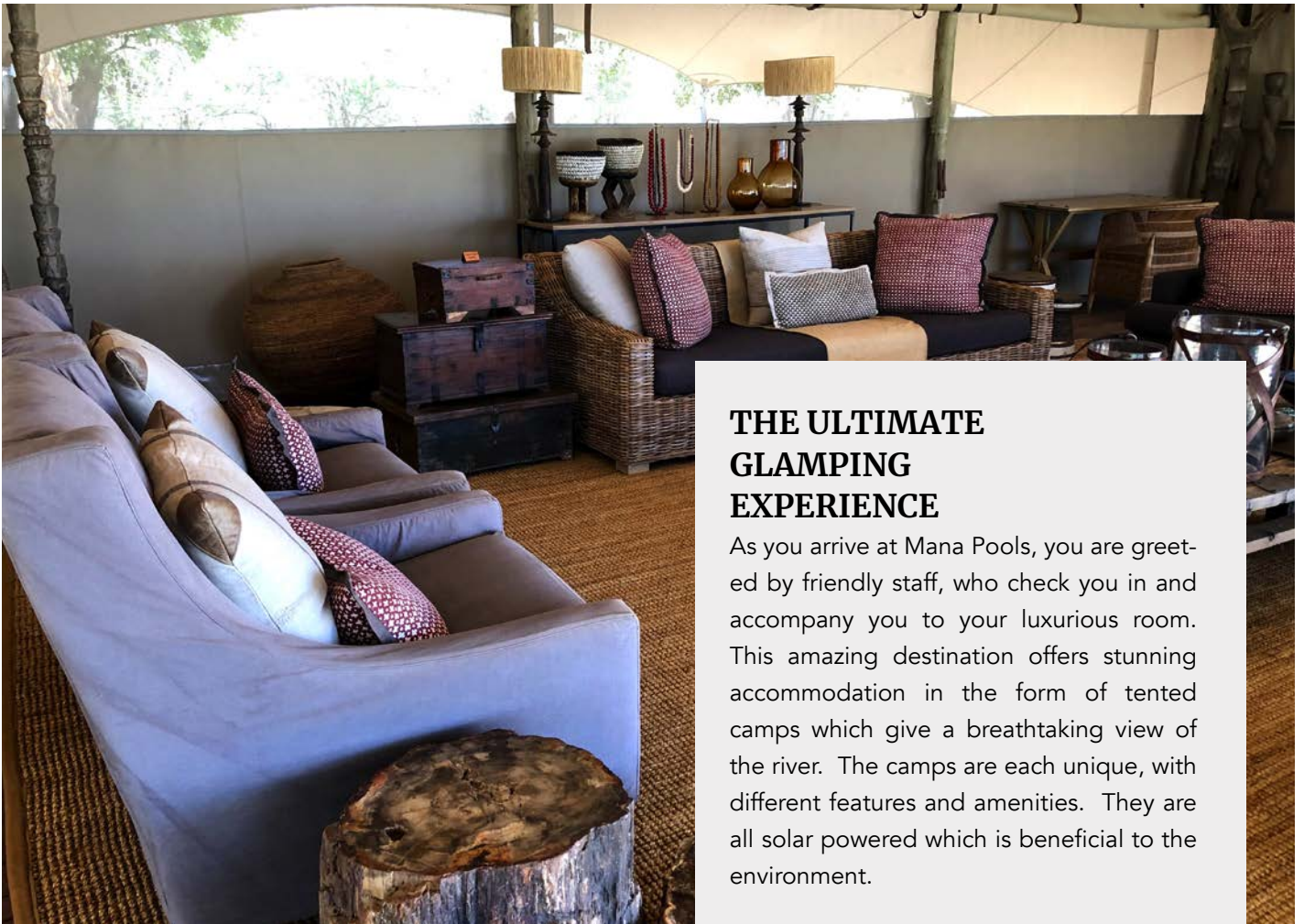
Discovering Mana Pools: A Place of Untouched Beauty

As the sun rises, you are wakened by a distinctive call of fish eagles as well as the sounds of different bird calls fill the air. The baboons give a loud bark whilst still roosting in the tall trees. As you walk around, you will see the herd of impalas running away. This and many others, are what you wake up to every morning in Mana Pools. Each morning is unique on its own and you are reminded that you are in the wilderness.

Mana Pools National Park is situated in Zimbabwe's Northern Region, on the banks of the Zambezi river, on the Zimbabwean side. The name 'Mana' means four in Shona and this refers to the four large pools found in this area which normally hold water all year round.

The meandering Zambezi River at Mana Pools is dotted with sandbanks, channels, islands, and oxbow lakes, illustrating nature's geographic process in carving out landscapes as we come to know them. Viewing from the Zimbabwean side of the Zambezi, you cannot help but notice the high escarpment made up of Zambia's mountains, which give a stunning panoramic backdrop to the river. The landscape on its own is breathtaking with assorted trees, wild plants and flowers.

Because Mana Pools is quite remote, it is only accessible either by air (charter planes) or by boat transfers. If one prefers to go by air, they will use charter planes like Wilderness Air and their journey would start from either Harare International Airport or Victoria Falls Airport. Those who prefer to go by boat transfer can drive to Chirundu, the Border Town between Zimbabwe and Zambia, and from there they will be transferred by boat to Mana Pools.



THE ULTIMATE GLAMPING EXPERIENCE

As you arrive at Mana Pools, you are greeted by friendly staff, who check you in and accompany you to your luxurious room. This amazing destination offers stunning accommodation in the form of tented camps which give a breathtaking view of the river. The camps are each unique, with different features and amenities. They are all solar powered which is beneficial to the environment.



RUCKOMECHI CAMP

Ruckomechi comprises of ten spacious and beautifully decorated en-suite tented camps, including two family rooms. The camp's central living space includes an inviting firepit for pleasant evenings under the African stars. Another unique feature includes a pool which overlooks the river. There is also a romantic Star Bed which is close to a busy waterhole. This allows couples to fall asleep while watching the stars and wakeup to a safari view of animals drinking water. Ruckomechi is very intimate, with an up-close and personal experience with nature.



LITTLE RUCKOMECHI CAMP

This camp is located within the private Ruckomechi Concession. The small cottage style camps, with modern contemporary interiors, provide a gorgeous view of grazing animals and an exclusive safari experience. The living and dining room tents offer an incredible view of the Zambezi river.



CHIKWENYA CAMP

This camp's seven modern glamping tents look out over an open floodplain and the broad Zambezi River and the great Rift Valley in the background. Chikwenya Camp is a photographer's paradise. The camp is surrounded by a dense forest of trees, which provide deep shade in the heat of the day.



Each camp has a dining and living area for guests to relax and enjoy their meals as they absorb the breathtaking scenery. Breakfast is served in the morning with continental options, before the first activity. Brunch is then served just before midday, afternoon tea before the second activity of the day, and then dinner in the evening. Guests also carry packed snacks with them as they embark on their various activities, which will be eaten during sundowners. This is a when they stop during their activity to watch the sunset. It is the most breathtaking part of the day; one dare not miss it.

For those who prefer self-catering, there are also some chalets provided by Zimbabwe Parks and Recreation, as well as some remote campsites for those who appreciate an authentic camping experience. However, this National Park is unfenced so guests should be aware of wild animals roaming freely around the accommodation areas at any time of the day. Fortunately, guests will have experienced safari guides who escort them to their rooms especially at night. As scary as this may sound, guests will have the opportunity to have an up-close and personal experience with the diverse wildlife such as buffalos, elephants, impalas, ku-

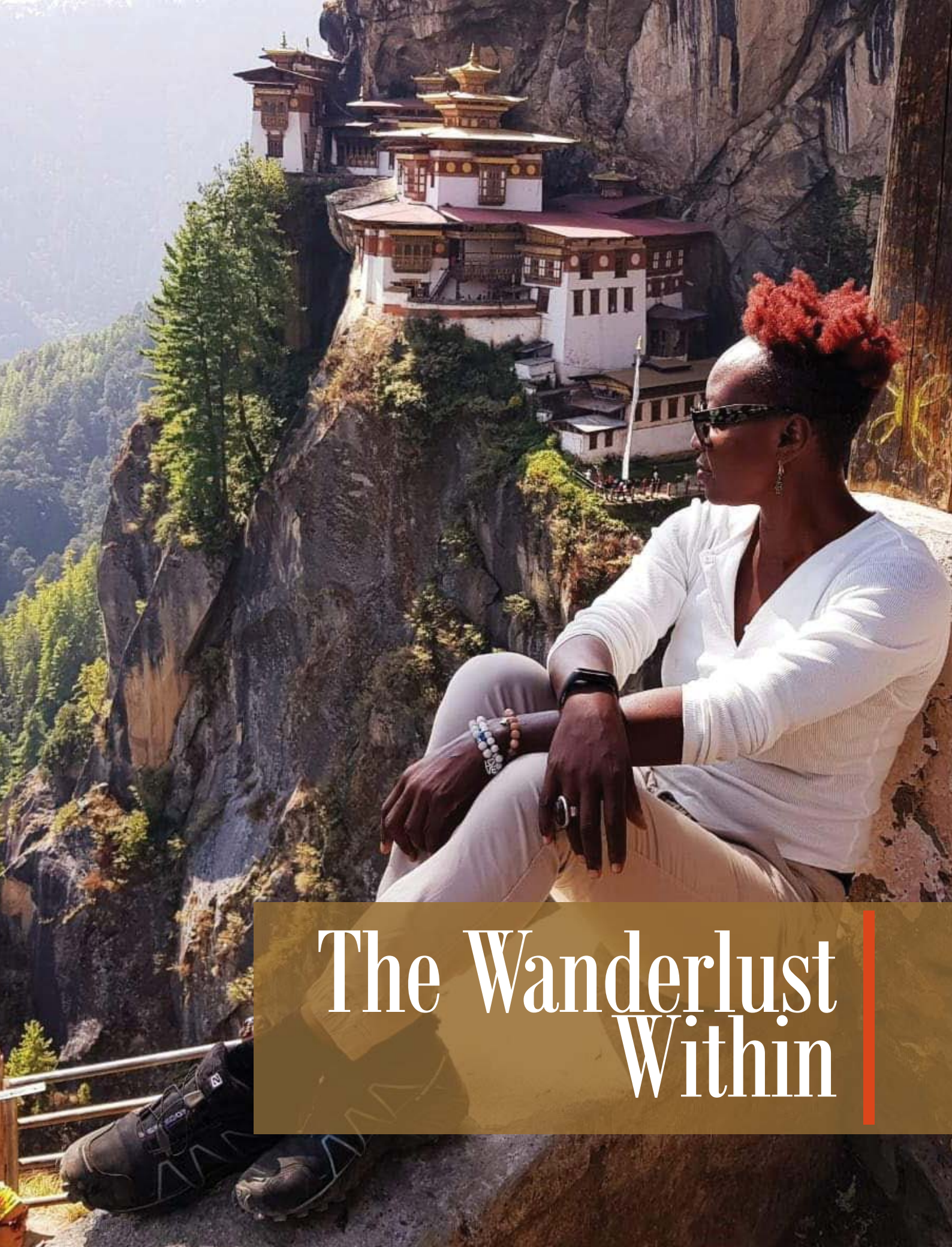
kus, bushbucks, hyenas, and even lions and leopards, just to mention a few of the wild animals that make up the amazing ecosystem of Mana Pools.

In Mana Pools there is so much diversity of wildlife and is very rich in birdlife. This National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to its beauty and pure, unmitigated wilderness. As an untouched Eco-tourism safari destination, the activities conducted in this National Park give one an unforgettable wilderness experience and will bring the adventurer at heart very close to nature.

This place truly is a paradise for those who are into photography. Guests can enjoy activities on both land and water. Land-based activities include game drives, guided bush walks, and bird watching. Water-based activities are catch-and-release fishing, canoeing, and boat cruises.

So, if you are looking for your next encounter with untamed Africa, visit Mana Pools and fall in love with the uniqueness of this remote destination. Those who have been can attest to the fact that this will be a trip you will never forget.





The Wanderlust Within

TRAVELICIOUS: Beyond Boundaries with Theresa Powell

I never imagined this woman from humble beginnings, born of Jamaican immigrants from a small West Indian community in the South West of England, would become completely obsessed and enamored with travel!



Visiting countries that many have never heard of, dared to go or even thought possible. Countries where being black meant locals approached me with a sincere sense of curiosity that emulated love and kindness, leaving me with an overwhelming sense of gratitude. By contrast, I've also visited countries where the looks and stares made me wonder whether the locals thought I was a new species visiting earth from outer space! Despite those few and far between experiences, the passion I have for travel is real.

I remember as a child being drawn to one of the only travel shows on British TV. I would live vicariously through the presenter, imagining myself visiting places no one I knew had ever travelled to.



Travelling alone gives me a real sense of empowerment that makes me feel unstoppable.

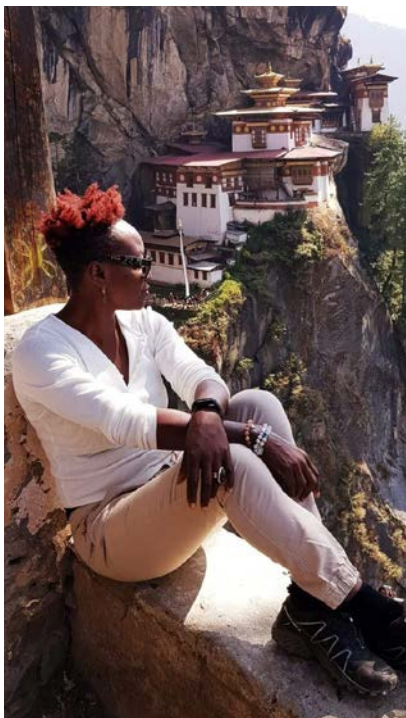
I know now that those childhood memories would be the catalyst for a life of wanderlust. My wanderlust fully ignited when I arrived in Abu Dhabi in 2012. I not only had the disposable income with a tax-free salary, but this incredible hub that allows me to spend weekends in places like India, Oman and Jordan. Some 7 years later, I've travelled to 61 countries across the globe. From Ethiopia to South Sudan, Djibouti to Benin, Tanzania to Togo, Uzbekistan to Tajikistan, Myanmar to Cambodia, Philippines to Pakistan, Bhutan to Nepal and Iraq to Saudi Arabia to name just a few.



A risk taker with a sense of adventure, I'm drawn to places off the beaten track where I have had some truly unique experiences that include climbing 2500 ft (partially barefoot), to see a sacred 6th century Ethiopian rock church perched high on the side of a cliff; hiking to the Tiger's Nest Monastery in Bhutan; camping near the Sudanese forgotten pyramids of Meroe; dancing with the girls of the Daasanech tribe and bonding with the Mursi tribes famous for their lip and earlobe plates in the Omo Valley.

When I travel, I feel alive and am seduced by the breathtaking scenery, the grit and authenticity of a place. I long to experience the ruggedness, particularly coming from Abu Dhabi, a stone's throw away from Dubai where everything is perfectly pristine and orderly, yet sometimes often soulless. I've met fascinating people and have had the absolute privilege of eating some of the most delectable dishes I have ever come across. Tasting food with flavours that make my taste buds explode! A big part of my travel experience is to break bread with the locals. This too allowing for a genuine up close and personal encounter. I can recall the time I made bread with a local Pakistani baker in Lahore, and the time I was invited to eat dal bhat with a local Nepalese family. Such incredible and humbling experiences that in some way shape or form has changed the way I look at life.





For me, travel has become life-affirming and transformational. It's where I go and what I do to nourish my soul. It's inspirational and aspirational escapism; a time for self-discovery. I've recognized over the years that travel, particularly solo-travel, has become a time for spiritual growth, hence the reason why I find solo-travel the most gratifying travel experience! My inaugural solo-trip was to Egypt in 2005 and was a step into the unknown that required courage and confidence.

I relished in the freedom to make my own decisions and create my own story, instinctively pausing and wondering aimlessly down pathways, across bridges and through bustling markets. Travelling alone gives me a real sense of empowerment that makes me feel unstoppable.

Nonetheless, stepping out to embark on your first solo travel adventure can be daunting. While some first timers may opt to stay in their comfort zone and visit more familiar destinations, others may throw caution to the wind and simply go for it. Landing somewhere between the two of these spectrums gives you a chance to push yourself out of your comfort zone, indulge in the local cuisine, immerse yourself in nature, join tours, strike up random conversations, visit a local market and pamper yourself at a spa. With that in mind I've listed three countries new solo travellers should consider visiting.





Travelicious picks:

Cambodia

This has to be one of the friendliest countries I have visited to date. The Cambodian people are so warm, friendly and welcoming. To get that adrenaline rush on your travels, try your hand at zip lining over the Cambodian jungle for an exhilarating ride in nature. I also definitely recommend that you hire a tut tut or a bike and soak in the ancient temples and sites. The Angkor Wat sunrise is a must and is truly spectacular.



Ghana

Ghana where one can learn about West African heritage, religion, art, food and culture. This country holds a special place in my heart. I travelled to Ghana to embark on an atonement pilgrimage to reclaim my ancestral heritage; and I am proud to call myself Akua Boahemaa. My travels to the Asante region where my African name was gifted back to me was heartfelt. Grab yourself a local guide and venture past Accra to the Asante region and Cape Coast for a spiritual journey like no other.

Thailand

Thailand is a place to recharge your mind, body and soul. From stunning beaches to meditation retreats and jungle treks. So many islands to choose from all with their own special charm. Rent a moped, take in the sights and sounds and lose yourself. Don't forget to throw in a day or two to experience the diversity of Bangkok; it's a must if you visit Thailand.



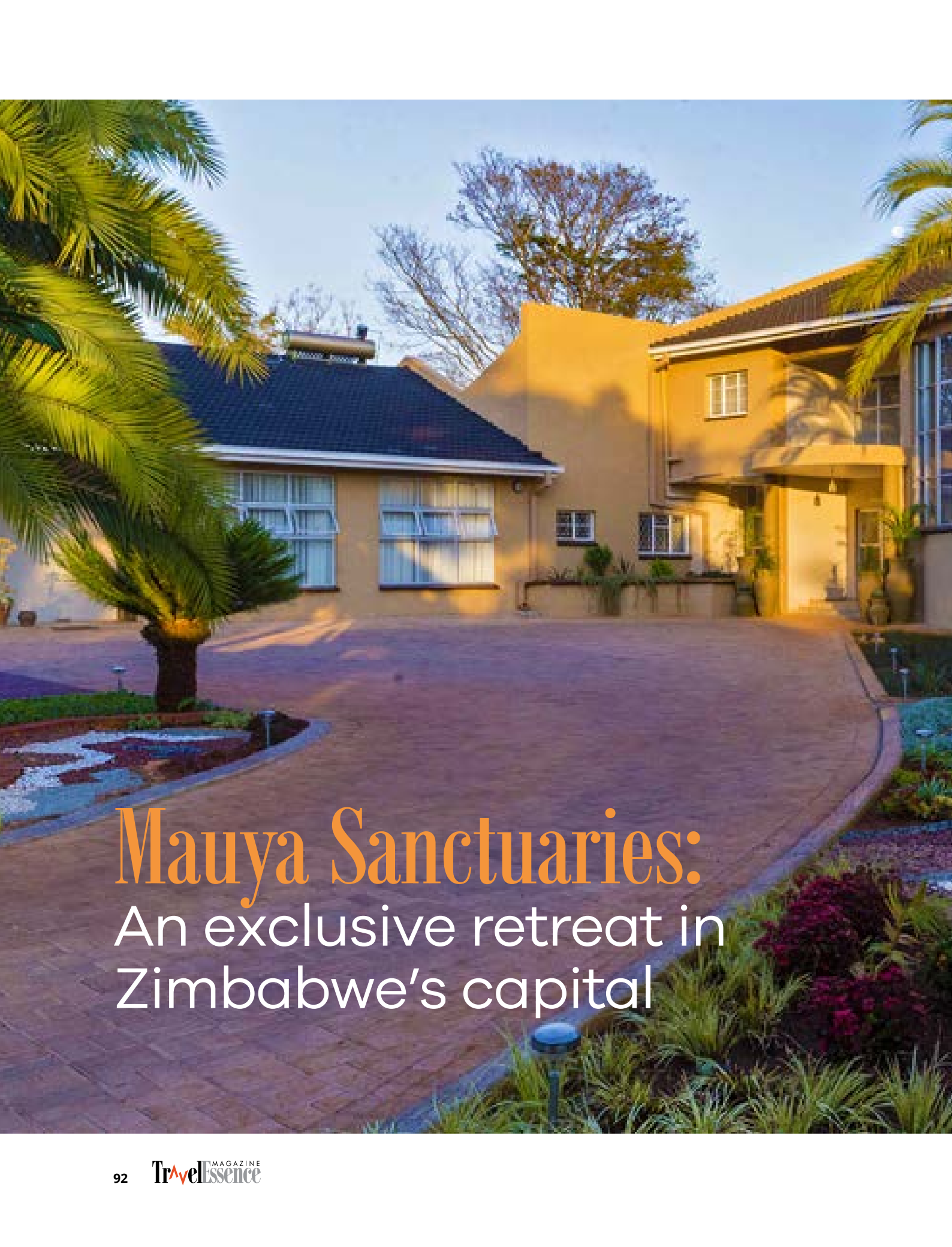
So, there it is; through Travelicious, Beyond Boundaries, I want to continue to share my passion for travel and inspire others to expose themselves to new places, new cultures, and new ex-

periences. Travel can be life changing if you allow yourself to be fully immersed and present. A big beautiful world awaits an opportunity to help you grow, connect and live!

WELCOME TO TRAVELICIOUS, BEYOND BOUNDARIES....

My name is Theresa Powell (aka Akua Boahemaa), a 40-something black female of Jamaican parentage with an addiction to travel! I'm a curious soul, seeking out travel experiences that take me off the beaten track to unique places across the globe. My passion for travel ignited when I moved from the UK to the United Arab Emirates in 2012. Living in this great hub allows for weekends where I can visit temples in India, climb mountains in Oman or simply hike in Tajikistan. I love authentic up close and personal travel experiences where I am stripped of the usual luxuries. So far, I've travelled to 61 countries and have no plans to stop any time soon!

Want to know where I'm heading next? Follow me on Instagram @travelicious2020.

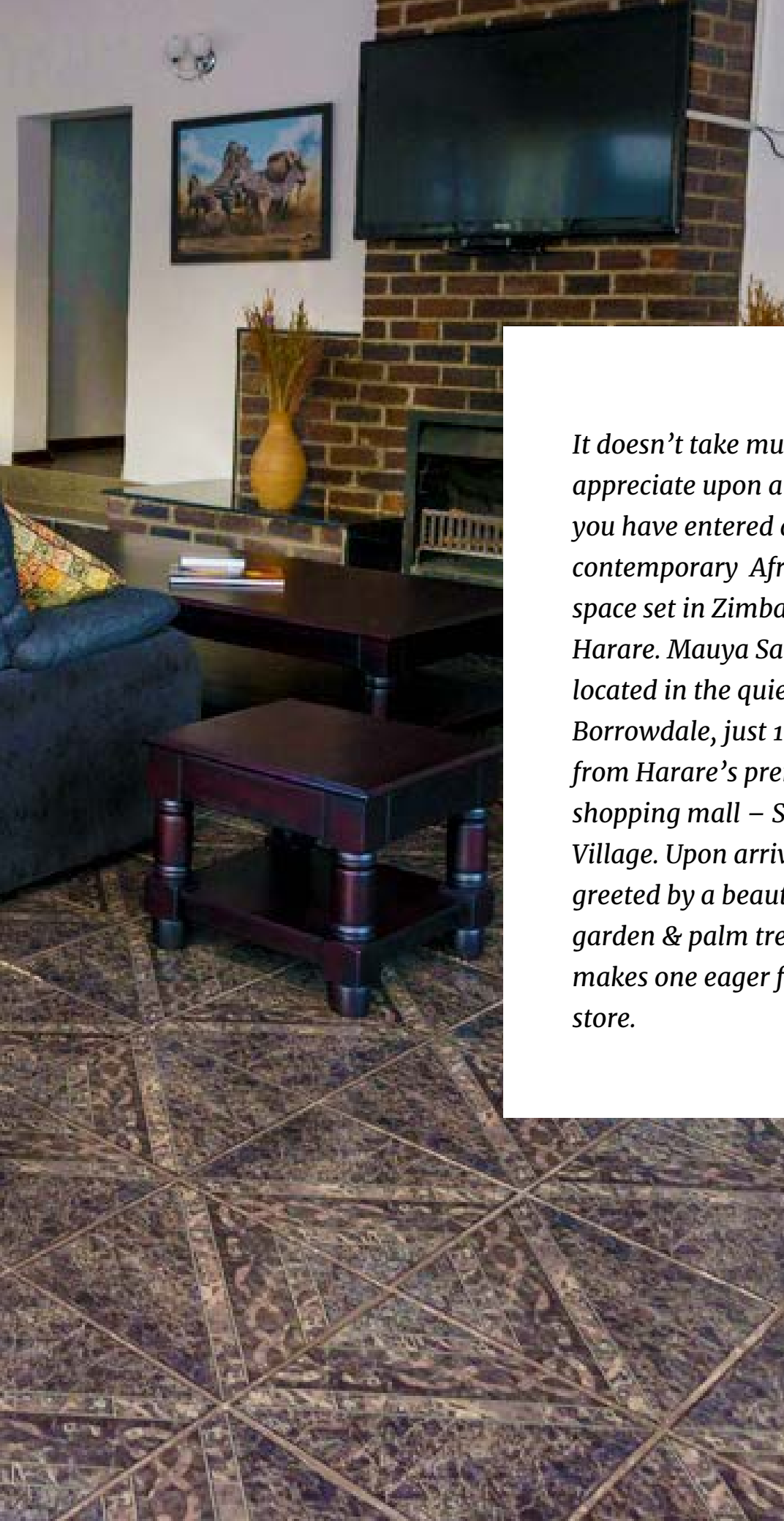


Mauya Sanctuaries:

An exclusive retreat in Zimbabwe's capital







It doesn't take much time to appreciate upon arrival, that you have entered a unique, contemporary African inspired space set in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare. Mauya Sanctuaries is located in the quiet suburb of Borrowdale, just 10 minutes from Harare's premium shopping mall – Sam Levy's Village. Upon arrival, guests are greeted by a beautiful rock garden & palm trees which makes one eager for what's in store.

A Great Zimbabwe mural on your left welcomes you into the quiet retreat's lobby area, with colourful basketry artwork just above, which makes for a simple ode to Zimbabwe's culture and historical foundations. The lodge boasts 6 beautiful suites which are themed after the Big 5, all of which present a distinctive infusion of modern and Zimbabwean elements. Each room has authentic artwork from Zimbabwe's very own Gareth Cook whose wildlife artwork enhances the African aura of Mauya Sanctuaries with how realistic and well done the works are.

As you walk into the backyard space it becomes very clear how much room you will have for social gatherings or your take on winding down after a day of meetings or site-seeing. You'll also find a full-size tennis court with basketball hoops and a fully equipped gym in case you want to invigorate the body through some quick exercise. For a relaxed afternoon under the African sun, a thatched Gazebo featuring more Zimbabwe-inspired artwork, and the crystal-clear swimming pool with its pristine water feature await you for your enjoyment.









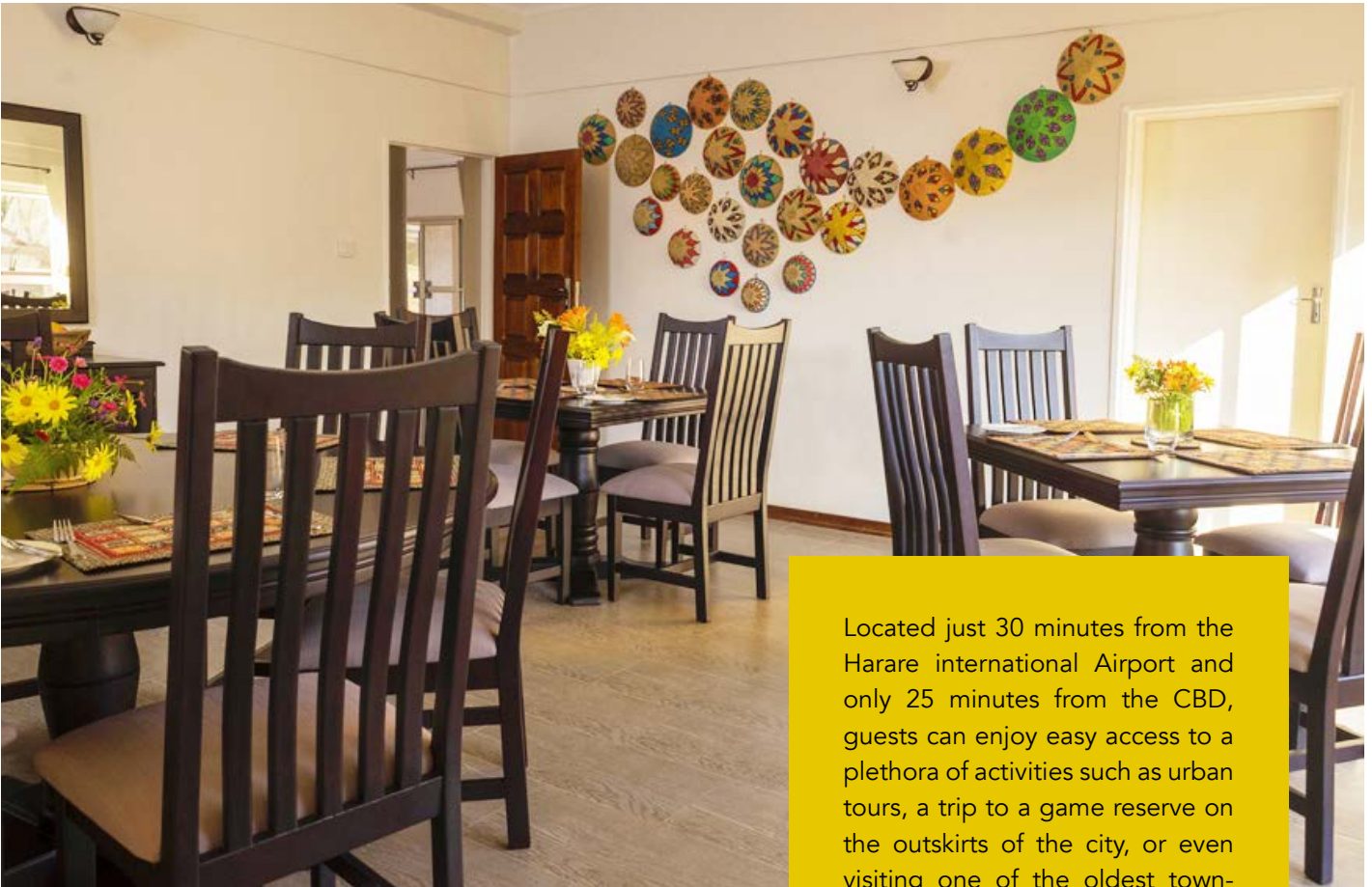




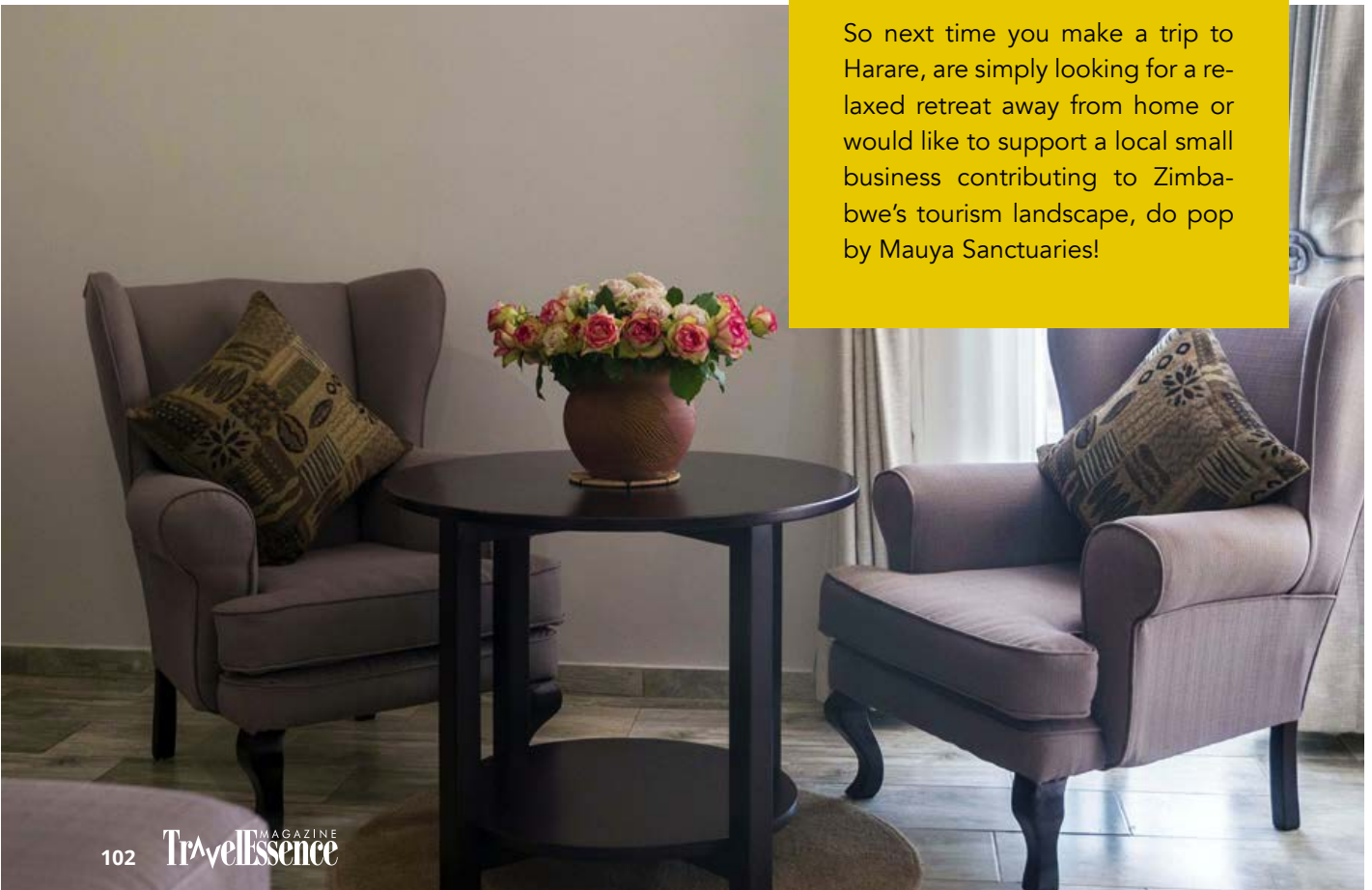
The lodge prides itself on sourcing 90% of its inputs from Zimbabwean locals, including furniture, linen, basketry, and artwork. Environmental impact and green practices are key aspects of the lodge's operational ethos, as evidenced by all in room stationary made of recycled paper.

To reduce the lodges' dependency on the electricity grid, the lodge is fitted with solar geysers, also using A++ fridges for lessened energy consumption, thus reducing their carbon footprint. This is a noteworthy cause that has been taken on by lodge in a time where green practices are key to preserving the environment.

In essence, Mauya Sanctuaries is ideal for the business and leisure travellers looking for a quiet place to rest their heads away from the hustle and bustle of city centre hotels, and is as a dynamic tourism space that provides a unique yet sustainable experience, set within a secluded neighbourhood of Harare.



Located just 30 minutes from the Harare international Airport and only 25 minutes from the CBD, guests can enjoy easy access to a plethora of activities such as urban tours, a trip to a game reserve on the outskirts of the city, or even visiting one of the oldest townships in the city – Mbare.



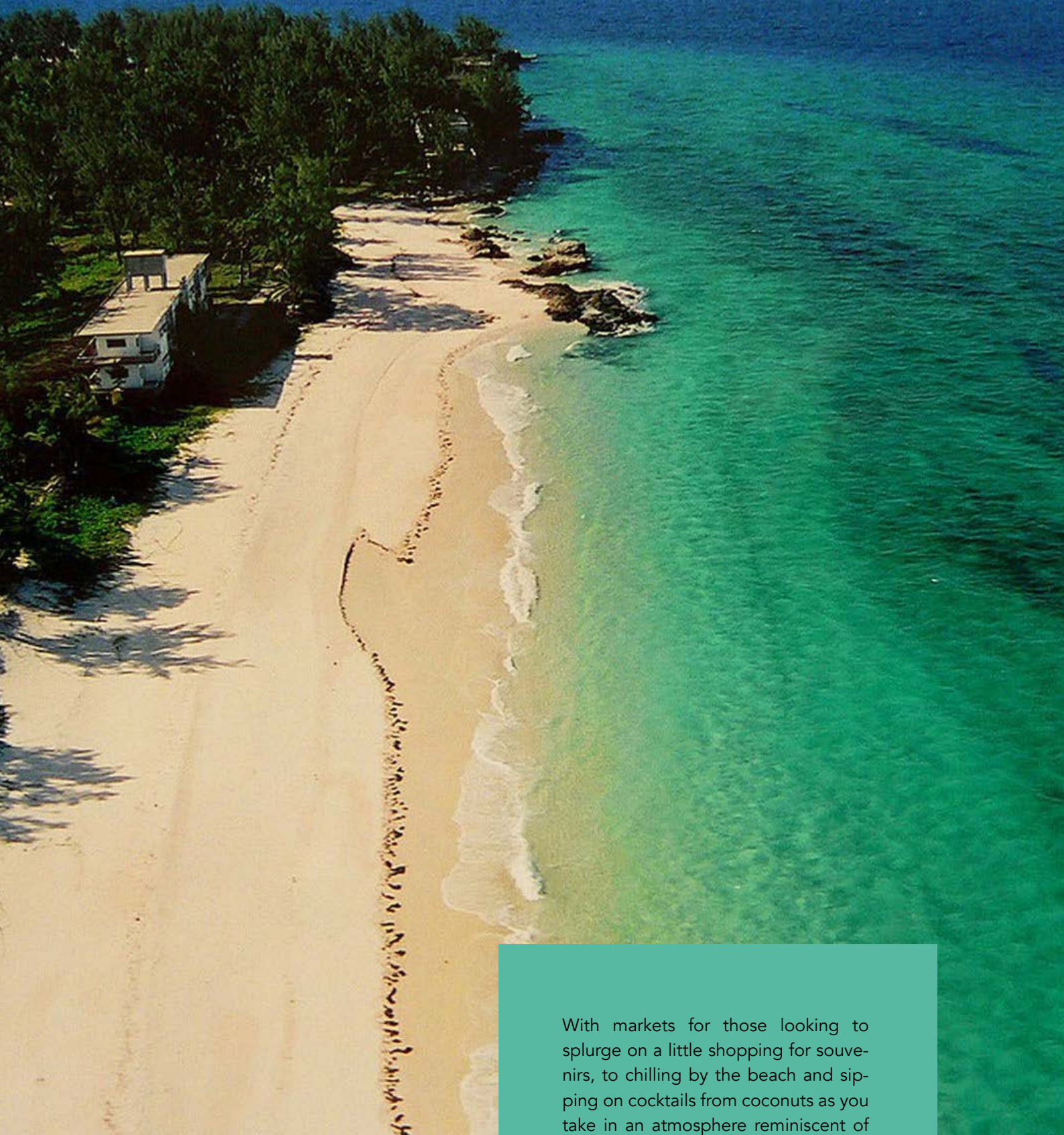
So next time you make a trip to Harare, are simply looking for a relaxed retreat away from home or would like to support a local small business contributing to Zimbabwe's tourism landscape, do pop by Mauya Sanctuaries!





What a week in Paradise Mozambique could look like.

Mozambique is one of Africa's best-known coastal destinations lying on the Indian Ocean, and like most countries across the continent's southern region, it offers so much for everyone.



With markets for those looking to splurge on a little shopping for souvenirs, to chilling by the beach and sipping on cocktails from coconuts as you take in an atmosphere reminiscent of the island life, Mozambique is a little paradise that offers old charm and culturally immersive experiences.





As with any tropical destination, a vibrant nightlife can feature on your itinerary, should you be looking to enjoy a festive night out with friends or family. But, we can all agree that a holiday in Mozambique is all about sun and sand, giving travellers and local residents alike an opportunity to create lasting memories with a staycation in Mozambique.

Because moments do arise when you find yourself desperate for a quick getaway, or adventure for those that prefer a jam-packed itinerary, ever wondered what a week spent across Mozambique could look like? Really! Imagine you had only a few days to sample the best of what this former Portuguese colony on the South-East of Africa had to offer for a quick dose of culture, lifestyle, and a little relaxation.

Well, the first stop would be the capital city of Maputo as you would likely have to fly in first out of a regional hub like Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport. Depending on how long you opt to spend in the capital, your remaining few days would be split between travel to the coastal destination of Vilankulos and back to the capital. Packed a holiday? Absolutely! If you could have a week in Mozambique, it could look a little something like this...

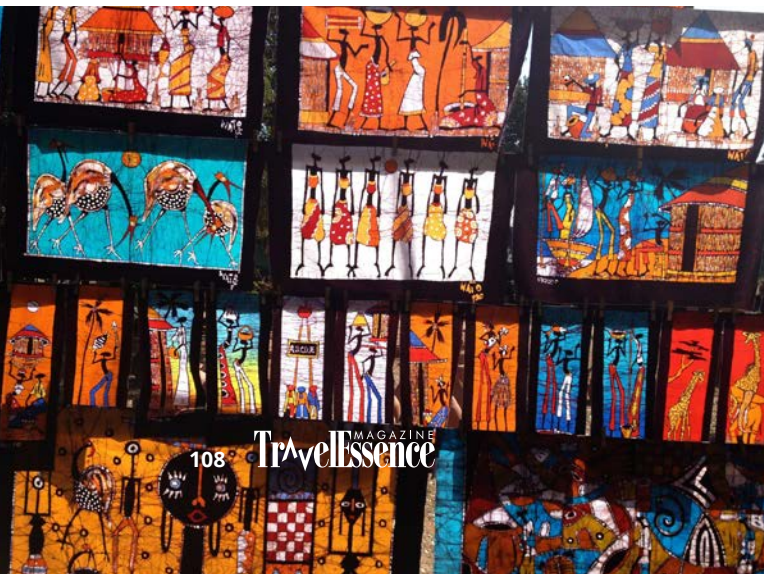


DAY 1 • MAPUTO

As you check into your accommodation, get comfortable and take in the view. Mozambique has a wide range of accommodations that will suit your budget, from the well-renowned Radisson Blu Hotel to more homey self-catering guesthouses that are fit for a family, a group of friends, or backpackers on an adventure.

Once you have settled in, make your way to the waterfront, which in itself is a vibe of buzzing activity and breathtaking views. Enjoy the sea breeze as you indulge in the flavors that the beachfront restaurants have to offer, with some ice-cold cocktails that will help to cool you down from the heat. Yes, Mozambique is toasty and humid, but its pristine beaches and vibrant culture compensates hugely!

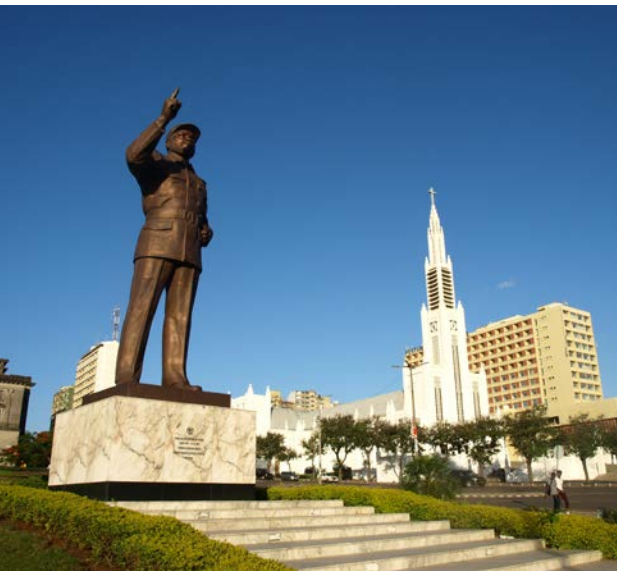
After lunch head over to FEIMA, a popular city market where you will find artisanal bags, art and crafts. This market is popular for its unique art pieces, its stunning clothing made from African fabrics, fashionable basket-weave-style bags and so much more!





DAY 2 • GO BACK IN OLD-TIME MAPUTO

Maputo is home to some of the most remarkable architecture. Once a Portuguese colony, the country still holds its history within its buildings that tells a story. The Casa de Ferro (The Iron House) is one of the city's most intriguing historical monuments from the colonial era. It was built in 1892, literally out of steel panels, for the Governor-General. Get a tour inside and fall in love with the vintage furnishings of the buildings. You will also find some interesting art pieces inside the art gallery, all made by local artists. Spend the day, appreciating the historical landmarks as you move around the city.



Landmarks such as the Fortress of Maputo, Independence Square, and the Maputo Central Train Station to name a few, really tell the story of the city's past under colonial rule, its fight for freedom, and life as an independent nation. You can end the day tour with a trip to the Rua De Xipamanine. This is the city's oldest markets where you can find anything from traditional spices and remedies to the traditional fabric wraps known as the capulana. This market is always buzzing with activity and is a great opportunity to mix with the locals and get a feel of the culture. The best thing about this market is that you can get some valuable items for the cheapest price.



If you enjoy a bit of nightlife, then get dressed and make your way to some of Maputo's best spots to dance the night away. The first stop will be Fernando's Bar. Get the party started in this cabin-style local establishment that is famous for its authenticity, great vibes, and most importantly, its signature drink - the Rum and Raspberry cocktail.

If a live band is your idea of a good night, then head over to Café Camissa. This bar has the perfect fusion of African and Portuguese influences with its music and art displays. Café Camissa is a buzzing spot where you will meet other tourists and expats to mix and mingle with.



DAY 3 • OFF TO THE COAST – HELLO VILANKULOS!

Vilankulos is a coastal town in Inhambane Province. It is the ultimate destination; white sands, pristine waters, and breathtaking views. The calm waters offer an opportunity to have fun in the sun with activities such as beach horse riding and water sports. This has made Vilankulos a popular destination among tourists globally, who crave the sun, sands, and sipping on coconut juice.

Vilankulos is located a good 715km from Maputo, which is a nine-hour drive and about an 11-hour bus ride if you are interested in a road trip. If you wish to fly, which when on holiday, is probably the preferred choice, it will be a one-hour direct flight to Vilankulos, or a two-hour flight which involves stopping in Inhambane for an hour. Unfortunately, there are very few flights per week to Vilankulos, so plan your trip accordingly to avoid any disappointments.

Whether you are checking into a fancy hotel, boutique style B&B, or a beach lodge, wherever you are staying in this coastal town, you are guaranteed unforgettable views. If you are up to doing some exploring, check out the local markets and immerse yourself in the culture by interacting with the local people. Get the freshest fruits, vegetables, and seafood at the cheapest price and really indulge in the town's scene, sounds and cuisine's flavours. You can also venture out to Machilla Magic, which is a community market where tourists can buy a diverse range of arts and crafts mainly made from recycled materials. Profits go back to the community and support the local artists. This really is a perfect place to buy souvenirs and gifts for loved ones back home.





DAY 4 • ISLAND MARINE SAFARI

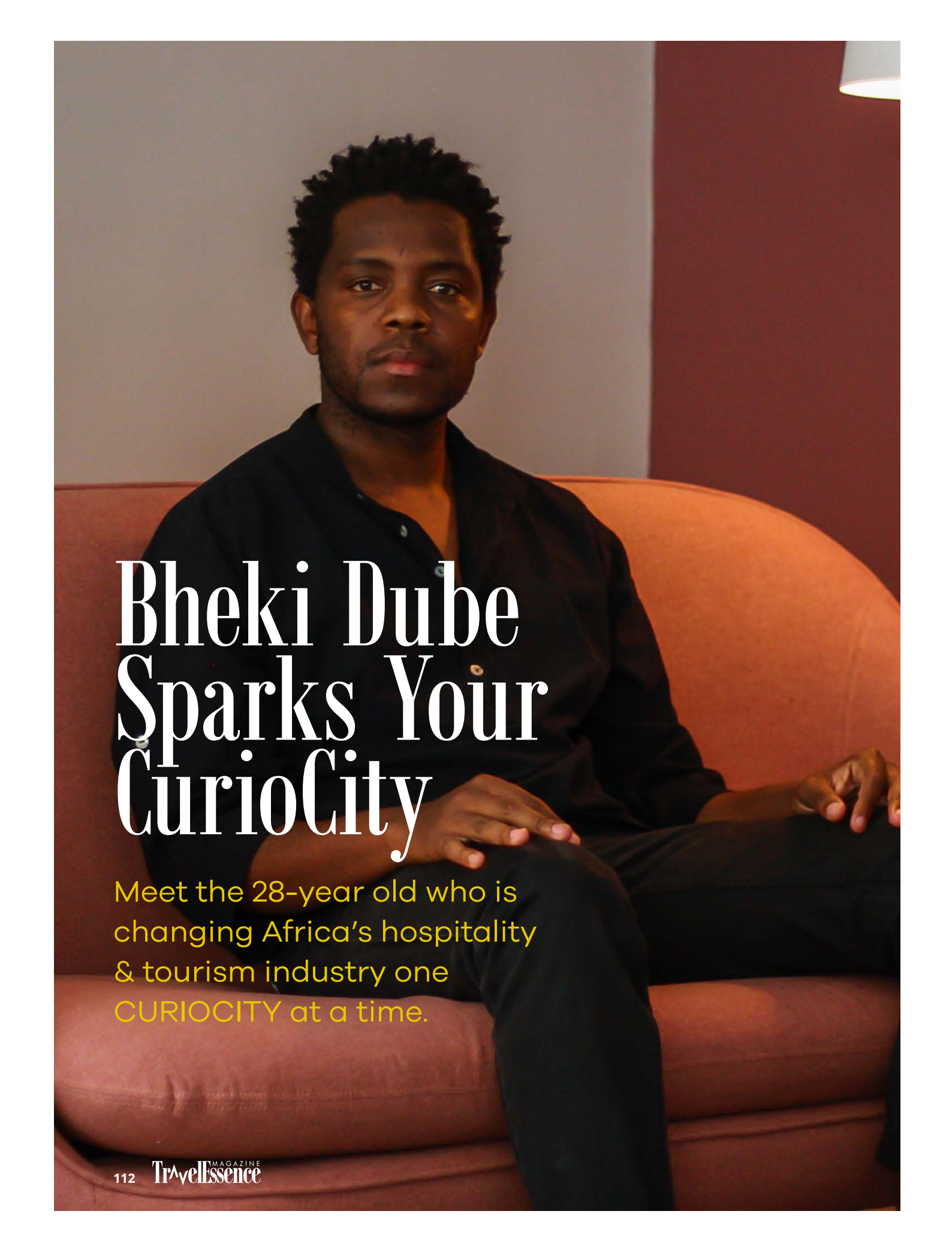
Rise early and take an early trip to Bazaruto Island, just 40 km from the mainland. You can book the trip with one of many agencies offering this excursion, bracing for an experience unlike any other would be watching the sunrise as you sail towards the island. Diving and snorkeling safaris are a must at this spot, as you fall in love with a variety of marine species such as turtles, manta rays, humpback whales, and more. The adventurer in you can also sign up for some deep-sea fishing for tuna fish, a popular activity in these waters. Enjoy a full day of fun in the water and watch the breathtaking sunset as you head back to the mainland, capping your day off with a meal at one of the beach-side restaurants for a sumptuous platter of authentic local food, infused with Portuguese inspired cuisine, as well as the fresh seafood.

DAY 5 • WRAPPING UP YOUR TRIP

If you still crave a bit more of this coastal nation, visit Tunduru Botanical Gardens and revel in the alluring nature the garden has to offer. Although small, the garden offers peace and serenity with lovely trees, flowers, and benches to sit on as you take in the atmosphere. There are bat colonies in the trees, which may be of interest if you are a photographer. On weekends, visitors will almost always find weddings taking place, with people singing and dancing.

You came you saw you conquered; the views, the flavors, the people, and the fun activities, leaving you wanting more. Between the water sports, dining, shopping and the sightseeing, five days in Mozambique will fly by in a flash in this Southern coastal destination. Looking for your next idyllic destination for a quick getaway? Try Mozambique for it simply can't disappoint.





Bheki Dube Sparks Your CurioCity

Meet the 28-year old who is changing Africa's hospitality & tourism industry one CURIOCITY at a time.







WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

Born and raised in inner-city Johannesburg, Bheki Dube - who was named Africa's Best Tourism Entrepreneur in 2019, by Tropics Changemakers Awards - founded an innovative tour company Main Street Walks at just 16-years old.

After five years of showing tourists the authentic side of Johannesburg's inner-city districts, he opened his first hostel at the age of 21, playing a key role in the regeneration of the city's renowned Maboneng precinct. The CURIOCITY brand was born and CURIOCITY Joburg quickly became one of the city's most popular hangouts.

"From a young age, I had a vision to reshape the way people travel in Africa," said Dube, "Starting out in Johannesburg, I wanted travellers to be able to experience the city on foot and hear stories from the entrepreneurs and creatives who live here so they can get a true sense of our identity."

A second site soon followed in Durban. Working with leading local designers and architects, the team transformed a 1930s landmark heritage building into a luxury design hostel which opened its doors in August 2016.



TAKING ON THE MOTHER CITY

Fast forward to 2019 and CURIOCITY has now taken their brand from backpackers to boutique with the opening of CURIOCITY Cape Town.

Set in a modernist three-storey building in the heart of the city's Green Point neighbourhood, the new CURIOCITY also boasts shared social spaces - including an onsite café-restaurant, pool and both indoor and outdoor lounge spaces - where like-minded travellers (and locals) can connect.

Dube explained "Our spaces allow travellers of all ages and demographics to better connect to the city they're visiting. At all of our sites, we offer tours and experiences that are unique to each destination, allowing guests to go beyond the typical tourist traps and really get under the city's skin."



To design the spaces, Dube has collaborated exclusively with leading local designers to ensure every detail - from the decor to the staff uniforms - reflects the brand's signature style.

With the slick interiors and central location, you'd be forgiven for thinking a stay here might break the bank. But that's not the case - stays range from R287.50 per person per night in a Shared Suite to just R1207.50 per night in one of the spacious Premium Suites which come complete with comfy king beds, private bathroom, lounge and kitchenette areas, smart TVs and air-conditioning. There's also a private balcony and drinks trolley so guests can relax with a cocktail and soak up the scenic views after a busy day exploring the city.

These rates make CURIOCITY one of the most affordable options in the Mother City for travellers who don't want to compromise on comfort and style.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Curious about what's next? Dube is already lining up properties in locations across South Africa for 2020, including Kruger National Park and a CURIOCITY wellness retreat. Beyond that, their sights are set on expanding across Africa.

Dube adds: "As pioneers of the tourism industry in South Africa, it is an exciting time for the brand as we grow and develop. We will be the first youth led and locally-rooted hospitality brand to open across the African continent."

Watch this space.

www.curiosity.africa

Contact: info@curiosity.africa

Social media: [@curiosity.africa](https://www.instagram.com/curiosity.africa)



A day trip to Livingstone: Zambia's Art Country

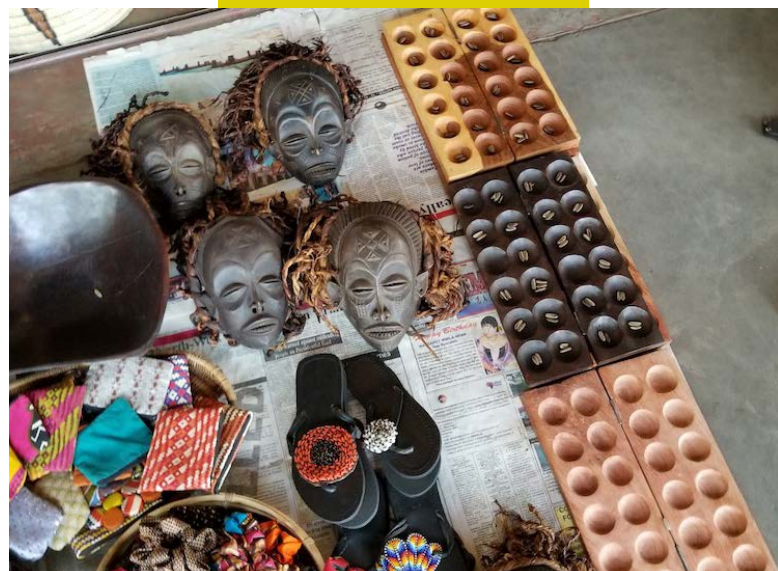
By Louisa Conrad Choruma



As I waited my turn to receive my passport and gate pass at the Livingstone border post – I pondered on earlier discussions I had had with friends. They passionately praised and attributed their life success to the Craft Industry of Zambia. From a renowned Recruitment Consultant who recalled her days of youth crossing into Zambia to sell her father’s wooden carvings , to a self-made Tour Operator who as a boy had to accompany his mom to sell crochet doilies at the market, I grinned to myself as I remembered how the latter boasted of his “competitive edge”.

As the only boy amongst a bevy of ladies, he sold more, merely as an object of fascination and amusement to tourists. I thought of Chief Munokalya Mupotola IV Siloka 111 Mukuni, the 19th Chief of the Leya. Chief Mukuni is the Tourism Ambassador of Livingstone, Zambia. As a champion of Tourism, he engaged the Zambian Government to acknowledge and develop the industry in Livingstone.

He encouraged visitors to come see, feel and experience both the town’s man-made and natural attractions. Not only has Chief Mukuni participated in all activities that are unique to the Mosi-Oa-tunya, like white water rafting and bungee jumping, but he remains passionate about arts and culture and to date, presides over three annual cultural ceremonies





Hello Livingstone

Livingstone, Zambia is approximately 20 minutes from Victoria Falls town Centre – an average 12 km between the two towns. In just over a quarter of an hour, one is transported from the realms of speaking Ndebele - the local dialect in Victoria Falls, to now hearing people converse in Nyanja, the national dialect of Zambia. The hot blue taxis are always ready to take visitors on a breezy drive into Livingstone Town along the Zambezi river, in true Mosi-oa-tunya style.

Falls Park is the first stop - just 5 minutes from the Zambian border. Weekends see the pop – up markets, with the carpark dotted with colorful tables showcasing Zambian Artwork. From vibrant chitenge [print fabric of central African origin], to elegantly polished wooden bowls and salad spoons made from wild olive wood, to the intricately twisted wire ornaments, key rings and

jewelry! Animal carvings range in size from miniatures to life-size wooden and stone sculptures. Beadwork work abounds, including woven baskets.

As “Mosi-oa-tunya Way” (yes, that too is the name of the street that leads into Livingstone town from the border) continues to meander into town – one can see other individual art displays on either side of the roads.

From batiks, to wicker furniture, children’s wire toys, quirky roadsides signs for various boarding houses and eateries, and more colorful chitenges blowing in the wind, there’s truly so much to capture one’s attention. This random exhibition heralds “Art Country” and is a forerunner of the main dedicated crafts’ market – the Mukuni Park Curio Market.



Discover Mukuni Park Curio Market

Mukuni Park is impossible to miss as it gently rises to the left of Mosi-oa-tunya Way in the center of Livingstone Town. Comprising of over 50 uniquely adorned stalls, this street market is a firm illustration of Zambian culture. In addition to the wares at Falls Park – Mukuni Park Curio market offers so much more, as it is also a display of the various tribes of Zambia.



Artefacts and pieces are styled as per a particular tribe. Walking sticks range from knobkerries to tribal canes and ebony wood canes, to elaborately carved sticks patterned with the mythical Nyami River god. Leather goods include sandals, belts and bags. As you navigate the aisles that separate the stalls, you'll also find jewelry made from stone, wire, cow horn and copper. Tonga stools and chairs, woven by the tonga tribe of both Zimbabwe and Zambia, together with woven baskets and wooden bowls, all have a story to tell of the different tribes found in this part of Southern Africa.



Going on safari and viewing game forms a huge part of Zambia's tourism industry, and this is elaborately captured in the various carvings of the Big five, small five and the "cute ugly five!" These stone and wood carvings are found in tiny 5 cm heights to large, life size sculptures that can be shipped by arrangement with the curio sellers. An ode to the vast array of wildlife that inhabit this region, it is commonplace to see animal print work on t-shirts, caps and aprons; with some creatively painted on tin cups and plates, making them very portable souvenirs!



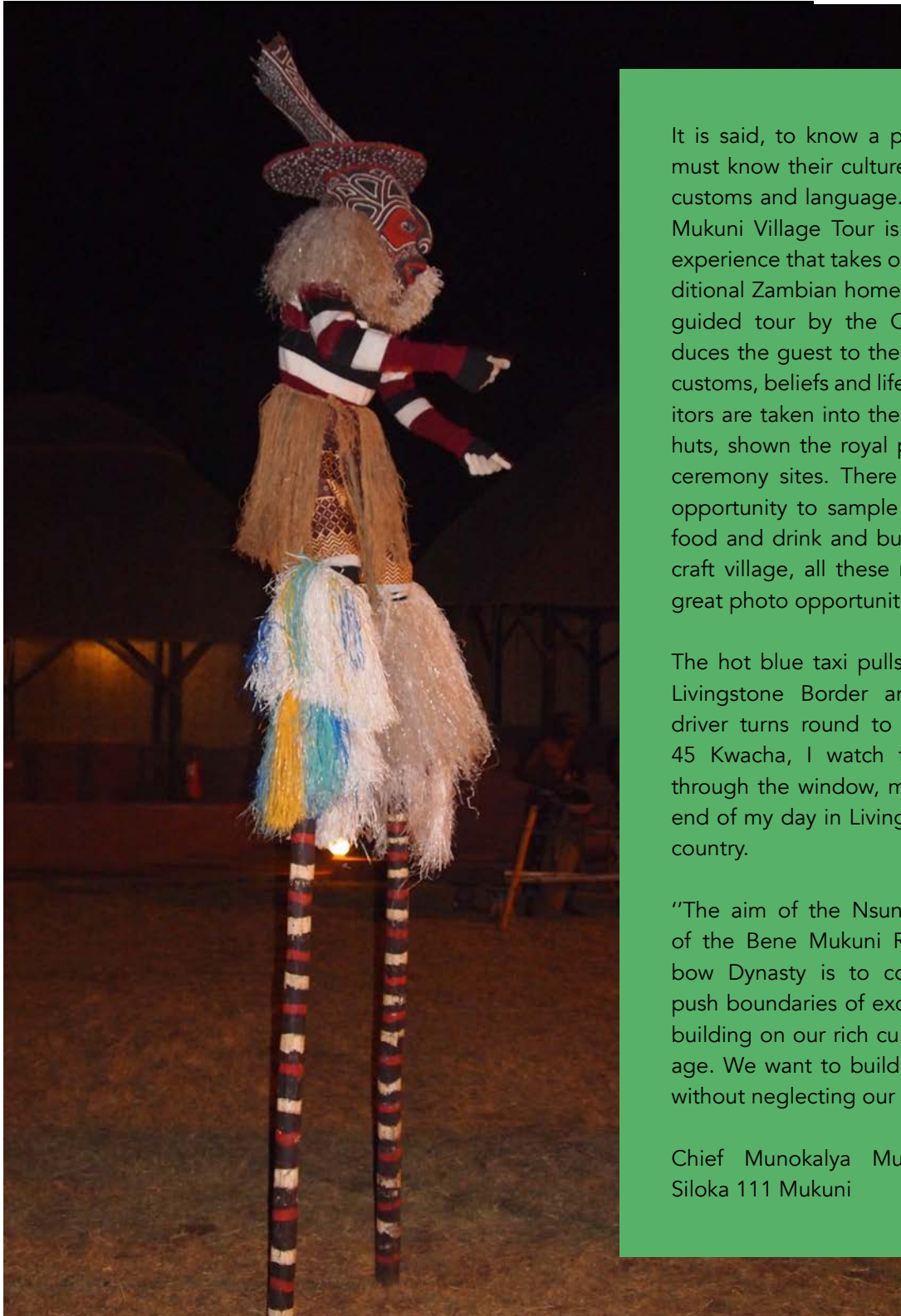
The beat of the African Rhythm

For tourists who yearn for an opportunity to carry with them symbols of Africa's musical culture, vibrant yet beautiful canvases of musical instruments such as rattles, horns, xylophones and trumpets can be found hanging on almost every wall at the market. Those who love to play instruments can indulge themselves in the individually patterned drums of varied sizes or the miniature marimbas that can fit into one's carry-on luggage!

Famous for its masked dancers, a representation of the spirit of the deceased – the Makishi Dancers or the Makishi Masquerade, as they are aptly called, are a must watch when in Livingstone. They perform clad in huge character masks that hide their identity as they fiercely dance to the drumbeat and voices of a chant master. Red, white and black stripes make up their costumes – which are embellished by chitenge, raffia and sack cloth. In the group there is always one on stilts – adding more thrill to the shows! Back at the market stalls, these exciting performers can be found portrayed as key rings, fridge magnets, hanging dolls or 30cm standalone figurines!

While each stall is exactly the same in size and dimension, they are distinctive in that each projects the unique personality of the salespeople. The tailor will not only have chitenge on display, but he will proudly showcase garments made from the same fabrics! The artist will have a collection of his own work, highlighting his distinct style. Furthermore, at Mukuni Park Curio Market – do you find an artist ready to sketch your portrait as you sit and soak in the sights and sounds of a street market!

Mukuni Park Curio Market is the heart of Livingstone as Maramba Market is the soul. This people's market is located on the outskirts of Livingstone. A 10-minute ride in the famous hot blue taxis will take you to a traditional market that is the home to both fresh food and curios. From dried and smoked bream, to green vegetables, to rows and rows of different chitenges, wooden and stone sculptures, traditional artefacts and cultural attire. Surrounded by a residential area and characterized by the sounds of local music, the open market allows one to experience the people of Zambia, and the tourists in their midst.



It is said, to know a people one must know their culture, their art, customs and language. The Chief Mukuni Village Tour is a Cultural experience that takes one to a traditional Zambian homestead. This guided tour by the Chief introduces the guest to the traditional customs, beliefs and lifestyles. Visitors are taken into the traditional huts, shown the royal palace and ceremony sites. There is also an opportunity to sample traditional food and drink and buy from the craft village, all these making for great photo opportunities.

The hot blue taxi pulls up at the Livingstone Border and as the driver turns round to collect his 45 Kwacha, I watch the sunset through the window, marking the end of my day in Livingstone's art country.

"The aim of the Nsungu Branch of the Bene Mukuni Royal Rainbow Dynasty is to continuously push boundaries of excellence by building on our rich cultural heritage. We want to build our future without neglecting our past."

Chief Munokalya Mupotola IV
Siloka 111 Mukuni

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Travel MAGAZINE Essence



An aerial photograph of the Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. The Zambezi River flows from the top left, through a wide, shallow section with many small islands, and then drops over a cliff as a massive waterfall. The water is white with foam. The surrounding landscape is lush green with dense vegetation. In the foreground, a road with a bridge crosses the gorge. The sky is clear and blue.

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