

## Trip Dossier for Malawi – Warm Heart of Africa

Trip Code: FMWH Issue date: 28 Jan 2008 Valid from: 01 January 2008

### Day 1 to 2 Fly to Lilongwe

Depart from London flying overnight to Nairobi and transfer the following morning for your flight to Lilongwe arriving. You will be met at the airport and transferred to the Wildlife Centre right in the heart of Lilongwe where you will stay. **Lodge (breakfast)**

### Day 3 Lilongwe Wildlife Centre

Lilongwe was built on the site of a nature reserve and is in the heart of the capital city that has since grown up around it. In the indigenous woodland you will find a unique haven for monkeys, baboons, smaller antelope, hyena and crocodiles as well as many species of birds. As well as providing an educational camp for local children, the centre cares for injured and orphaned animals and has an animal adoption scheme. In the morning you will be able to have a bush walk and in the afternoon the children may like to help the staff prepare the meals for the orphaned animals. **Lodge (breakfast)**

### Day 4 Luwawa Forest

The drive today will take you from the gentle undulating hills of the central plateau up into North Malawi with its forested mountainous terrain and river valleys. Peaks in the Viphya Plateau soar up to 1800 metres and then drop so sharply into Lake Malawi there is no shore. Deep in this uninhabited forest you will stay overnight at Luwawa. In the afternoon you can either go on a forest walk or mountain bike amongst the sweet-smelling pines. See the sun set from the watchtower, the silence broken only by birdsong. The birdlife is prolific and you may also see bushbuck, duiker, monkeys and baboons, occasionally a leopard. **Lodge (breakfast, lunch and dinner)**

### Day 5 Spend time in a local school and then drive to Vwaza Marsh Reserve

After breakfast visit a local school which Luwawa supports. Spend a couple of hours with the local children to see what they are learning. If you have any pens and pencils you can give them to the headmaster to distribute amongst the children. Along the Zambian border to the northwest lies the Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve. In contrast to the high plateau of Luwawa, the plains of the Vwaza are broken only by a few rocky outcrops. The reserve is criss-crossed by tributaries of the River Luwewa and its huge variation in habitat from forest to grassland and marsh makes it home to a broad range of birdlife, lots of river-loving animals such as buffalo, hippo, antelope and large herds of elephant. In the afternoon your guide will take you on a walk around Lake Kazuni. **Camp (breakfast, lunch and dinner)**

### Day 6 to 7 Nyika National Park

Before you leave Vwaza there will be a chance to have another walk or game drive around the Reserve. Then head further north to Nyika National Park. This is Malawi's largest and oldest park spread over a huge granite plateau which rises to 2400 metres. The great gently sloping domes are described as being like whalebacks, as if sculpted by a giant. From the gates of the park it is still a three hour drive to the camp and so there is plenty of opportunity to spot the wildlife as you reach the higher plateau. The birdlife here is truly extraordinary with more than 400 species. The next two nights will be spent in Chelinda Camp in chalets overlooking the dam. In the morning it is an early start for the game drive or walk and in the afternoon you can go horse riding (optional). In the evening you could also take an exciting night safari (optional). **Chalet (breakfast, lunch and dinner)**

### Day 8 to 9 Makuzi Beach

You leave the game park at Nyika and drive south today, first back to Mzuzu, the capital of the northern region and market centre for the surrounding area, through endless rubber plantations down the Rift Valley and on to Chintcheche. There will be an opportunity to look at the rubber trees up close and see how the sap is tapped. A picnic lunch will be had along the way. Finally you'll arrive at your beach lodge on Lake Malawi. This is Africa's third largest lake, and it forms a border between Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique. Makuzi Beach is a little piece of paradise with its picture postcard perfect white sand, rocky outcrops and rainforest fringing the coastline. There is plenty of time to explore this afternoon, walking, meeting the villagers or simply relaxing on the secluded beach. The next day will be at leisure to enjoy the myriad activities on offer here such as fishing, kayaking and snorkeling. There is an optional boat trip to a nearby island. Old Bandawe nearby was the temporary home of the Livingstonia mission when early missionaries were looking for a suitable site. Makuzi helps a local school and is active in developing local self-help projects such as vegetable gardens and reforestation. There will be a chance to visit one of these projects. **Lodge (breakfast)**



### Day 10 Lakeshore drive to Senga Bay

Sometimes hugging the shores of Lake Malawi, this morning's drive south stop takes you first to Dwangwa, a company settlement run by the sugar estate. The smell of molasses fills the air. Here, you can visit the factory to see how the sugar cane is processed and have lunch at the Club. Senga Bay, the next stop along the lake, will give you another perspective on Lake Malawi from its narrowest point. It is inside the forest reserve and a paradise for bird watching and spotting all kinds of small animals such as monkeys, genet cats, hyrax and small antelopes. Once you have settled into the Lodge visit the Chiclid fish farm where they breed and export the colourful fish that are endemic to Lake Malawi. Enjoy the lake from your own private beach. **Lodge (breakfast)**

### Day 11 Mua Mission and Danforth Yachting Lodge – watersports activities included

Carry on driving around the lake to Mua Mission. Over one hundred years old the mission has in recent years developed a cultural centre to harness the skills of local crafts people and enable them to make a living from their handiwork. You will be able to see the artisans at work and then purchase their wonderful wood carvings, pottery, paintings and batik. The Cultural Museum here is Malawi's foremost museum, depicting the Ngoni Culture, a defining tribal group in the country's development. You'll have a picnic lunch and then it is a short drive to Cape Maclear set in the Lake Malawi National Park, the world's first freshwater national park and a UNESCO World Heritage site. Wooded mountains drop down to sandy beaches and it's easy to see why Dr Livingstone named the deep crystal waters the 'Lake of Stars' when he first saw it in 1859. You will stay at the Danforth Yachting Lodge where you can swim, sail, snorkel, windsurf, kayak and water ski (all watersports are included except scuba diving which is an optional extra). **Lodge (breakfast, lunch and dinner)**

### Day 12 Water sports on Lake Malawi

Whatever activity you did not have time for yesterday you can try today. Whilst you are skimming over the water keep an eye open for the teeming shoals of fish beneath. It is like a giant aquarium, full of the iridescent colours of hundreds of different freshwater species. You can even feed the fish directly from your hand. Maybe you'll see an otter – there is a renowned colony here, then take a walk or a mountain bike ride around Cape Maclear to see over a hundred species of birds, troops of baboons and possibly some antelope. If the children still have energy to burn the lodge even has a trampoline. There will also be an opportunity to have a sunset cruise on the lake. **Lodge (breakfast, lunch and dinner)**

### Day 13 Colonial Zomba

Zomba is the former capital and colonial administrative centre of Malawi and has some fine buildings such as the old Gymkhana Club and Parliament. Check into your hotel for lunch and then visit one of the largest, most colourful and liveliest markets in Malawi. Here you can practise your haggling skills with the many craft sellers. Rising above the town is the Zomba Plateau, 1800 metres high. Streams and forests, wild vegetation and waterfalls, it is home to Blue monkeys, forest birds and orchids. This afternoon you'll drive up to the plateau and take a walk through the stands of cypress, pine and cedar. **Hotel (breakfast)**

### Day 14 Dedza Pottery

This morning you have a leisurely start after a full breakfast and depart via Blantyre to Dedza, renowned for its pottery throughout Malawi. Have a picnic lunch en route and arrive mid-afternoon. There will be time to relax and then visit the Pottery. See the craftspeople throwing the pots, and firing and painting them in the local bright colours. The children will have an opportunity to make their own mug or ornament. **Lodge (breakfast)**

### Day 15 Drive to Lilongwe Airport

Your final morning in Malawi is taken up with the drive back to Lilongwe International Airport. Here you board a flight to Nairobi, to connect with your overnight return flight to London.

### Day 16 Arrive London

## Extension to Mulanje Mountain

### Day 14 Mulanje Mountain

You'll leave Zomba for your trip to Mount Mulanje. But first you'll stop in Blantyre, Malawi's commercial capital – named after the birthplace in Scotland of Dr. Livingstone. It is older than even Johannesburg and Nairobi. This is where serious provisioning takes place for your safari over the next few days. Malawi's vast tea estates stretch east of Blantyre to the foot of Mount Mulanje and you will pass through some on your way to the Lujeri Estate. Developed by Lyons in the 1920s, you probably find some of your tea bags came from here. You'll spend the night in a delightful old colonial house in the



Tea Plantation. Explore the foothills this afternoon in preparation for your ascent tomorrow. **Hotel with swimming pool (breakfast)**

### Day 15 Trek to the Top of the Mountain

Over 3000 metres high this awesome granite mountain dominates the surrounding area and is the highest mountain in Central Africa. It is so high it has its own climate at the top and can bring rain to nearby Blantyre even in the dry season. Watch out for the huge drop in temperature at the top! Deep clefts, streams and waterfalls, sheer faces and gentle slopes mean that all levels of walking are catered for. This is a fully supported hike and porters take all the luggage and supplies. As you climb higher the vegetation changes and so does the bird and animal life. Expect to see vervet monkeys and klipspringer antelope. Buzzards and black eagle may be spotted and closer to earth there are huge numbers of butterflies. At the end of your seven-hour hike spend the night in a mountain lodge. The hike is non technical and within the ability of all reasonably fit individuals. However, for those not wishing to go, you can stay at the base of the mountain in Lujeri Lodge and enjoy a visit to a working tea factory instead. **Mountain hut or lodge (breakfast, lunch and dinner)**

### Day 16 Descent from Mulanje

Wake up and marvel at the beauty around you. Depending on the weather you will be amazed by the light on face of Chambe Peak and enchanted by the vistas of narrow gullies, amphitheatres of rock, and majestic Mulanje Cedar trees towering over 30 metres high. Continue your circular hike, which will eventually bring you down the mountain to the Lujeri Lodge where you will spend the night. For those who opted to stay at the foot of the mountain, spend the day relaxing and hiking in the lower foothills. **Lodge (breakfast, lunch and dinner)**

### Day 17 Dedza Pottery

Travelling north via Blantyre you'll have a picnic lunch en route to Dedza, renowned for its pottery throughout Malawi. This afternoon there will be time to relax and then visit the Pottery. See the craftspeople throwing pots, and then firing and painting them in bright local colours. The children will have an opportunity to make their own pots. **Lodge (breakfast and dinner)**

### Day 18 Fly to London

Today you'll drive back to Lilongwe International Airport. Here you board a flight to Nairobi, to connect with your overnight return flight to London.

### Day 19 Arrive London

*This itinerary includes our group flights from London. If you are making other flight arrangements, please refer to your Confirmation Invoice and Joining Instructions for details of the start of the trip. Please remember international flights and trip dates do occasionally change, so please always purchase flexible tickets. Each itinerary is planned many months in advance. Consequently there are factors over which we have no control and which could make changes necessary. We will always endeavour to keep you informed of any such changes in advance.*

**Is this right for your family?** Accommodation is in good quality but sometimes simple, rustic lodges, chalets and a hotel. Although the scenery is beautiful, be prepared for a few long traveling days (four hours plus). Suitable for kids from five and up. Ten and up if you intend to walk up Mt Mulanje. Those not wishing to trek can relax at a lodge and visit a tea estate.

**Climate** It's generally hot and dry from January to March, hot and wet from April to June (during the so-called "long rains"), warm and dry from July to October, and then warm and wet from November to December (during the "short rains") . Temperature is related to altitude; the higher you are the cooler it gets.

Average monthly climate in Lilongwe

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
<b>Max °C</b>	27	27	27	27	25	23	23	25	27	30	29	28
<b>Min °C</b>	17	17	16	14	11	8	7	8	12	15	17	18
<b>Rainfall (mm)</b>	208	218	125	43	3	0	0	0	0	0	53	125



**Accommodation** The hotels and lodges are of 3 to 5 star standard modern, clean and comfortable and offer friendly service. All rooms have private facilities and are booked on a twin share or family room basis.

**Food and Drink** Meals are included as per the itinerary. Please remember to drink plenty of bottled water during your trip.

**Currency** The unit of currency is the Malawian Kwacha (MK) divided into 100 tambala. At the time of writing (October 2007) UK £1 = 285K Sterling Travellers' Cheques are readily accepted in banks and large hotels. We recommend that you change money at the airport. Credit cards are accepted in large hotels and some souvenir shops. Please note, payment by Travellers' Cheques and credit cards are subject to 6% commission.

#### Local Costs

A small bottle of mineral water (500ml)	£1.20
A large bottle of mineral water (1 litre)	£2.50
A can of coke (soft drinks)	£1.00
A carton or bottle of fruit juice	£3.00
A bottle of beer	£3.00
A light lunch time snack – sandwich for example	£5.00
A two course meal* - excluding drinks	£8.00
A three course meal* - excluding drinks	£15.00

\*Based on a mid range tourist restaurant.

**Tipping** is a recognised part of life and although at your discretion you will be expected to reward service. It should be remembered, however, that over-generosity could lead to jealousy in poor countries. Please remember that all tips should be a way for individuals to thank staff for good service. As a guideline each traveller should allow £2-3 per day to cover tips for local staff.

**Language** The official language in Malawi is English, although the national language is Chewa (or Chichewa).

**Time** Malawi is GMT +2 hours

**Departure Tax** There is a Malawi Departure Tax of US\$30.00 payable by all passengers to the government cashier directly after checking in at Lilongwe Airport.

**Packing List** Please refer to our separate "packing list"



## Clothing & Equipment List for Malawi – Warm Heart of Africa

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The following list of clothing and equipment is intended to be fairly comprehensive and experienced travellers may well take a good deal less luggage than we recommend. It is a good idea to wear muted colours while on safari as bright colours can be seen by animals and birds from a long way off.

CLOTHING	NUMBER PER PERSON	Check	EQUIPMENT	Check
Walking Shoes	1 pair		Soft-sided bag 50 – 80 litres	
Trainers or Strong Sandals	1 pair – all purpose wear		Lightweight Daypack – 25 litres	
Socks	4+		A variety of plastic bags	
Waterproof Jacket	1 lightweight		Sunglasses	
T-Shirts	3 +		Personal First Aid Kit	
Long Trousers or Skirt	2 +		Large Water Bottle	
Short Trousers	2		Insect Repellent (with high DEET content)	
Long Sleeve Shirt	2+		Torch and Batteries	
Track Suit Bottoms or Similar	Optional		Camera, Film and Accessories	
Sunhat / Baseball cap	Essential (styled to shade face, ears and neck)		Reading Material	
Warm jacket	1		Washing & Shaving Kit - wet wipes are refreshing	
Thin Fleece or Sweatshirt	1		Towel or Sarong	
Warm hat, scarf and gloves	Woolly or fleece (winter)		Guide Book & map	
Swim Wear	1		Loo Kit (in small bag) loo paper/tissues	

ITEM	Check	ITEM	Check
Passport/ Visa		Small Sewing Kit & Safety Pins	
Air Tickets		Universal travelling adapter	
Money/Travellers Cheques		Tooth Paste/Floss	
Cash Cards/Visa		Small Calculator	
Insurance Documents		Sweets and Snacks for the journey	
Trip Information and Itinerary		Cold Water Detergent	
Money Security Belt/Pouch		Biodegradable Soap	
Spectacles/Contact Lenses		Binoculars – optional	
Sunscreen – lots of it		Notebook/Diary/Pen	
Moisturising Cream & Lip salve – not in hand luggage		Small presents for local kids – biros, balloons, books	
Scissor/Mirror/Nail Clippers – not in hand luggage		Small toys and books for your children	

For details regarding **hand luggage restrictions** please visit [www.baa.com](http://www.baa.com)

