

# TINOBHURURUKA

Shona / verb / "Let's fly"

JANUARY 2026 ISSUE 2



GRAND AIR  
CHARTER SERVICE



**Diary of a  
Zimbabwean  
Bush Pilot**

**Rhino Conservation**  
*How can you help?*

**Local Talent** - Art to inspire you

**Zambezi Elephant Fund**  
*Protecting Zimbabwe's elephants*

**SHOWCASING TOP  
LODGES, CAMPS &  
GETAWAY DEALS**

**Wild dog Relocation**  
*'Project Rewild'*



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# Foreword



## Seeing the World from a Different Perspective

**T**here's something about being in the air – that quiet moment when the landscape stretches endlessly below and you see it all from a new angle. From up here, you can trace the paths of ancient rivers, see the shimmer of floodplains, and watch herds move as one across the land. It's impossible not to feel connected to it all – the vastness, the beauty... and the fragility.

Guiding, for me, is much the same. It's about perspective; helping people see and feel Africa in all its richness, to notice the small and the spectacular, to listen and to understand that every part of the wild has its place. Whether you're on foot, in a vehicle, or in the air, there's always something new to learn if you take the time to look.

I see that the name of this publication, Tinobhururuka, means "we are flying" in Shona. To me, it speaks of freedom, movement and discovery, but also of shared responsibility. As one of the founding members of Zambezi Elephant Fund, I've seen first-hand how vital it is to protect the landscapes and wildlife we fly over, and to support the people working so tirelessly on the ground to safeguard them.

Wherever your journey takes you, may you look deeper – and with appreciation and care. Because I think it's only when we see the world like this that we truly begin to understand how precious it all is.

It's a privilege to fly with Grand Air Charters – a team that shares that same appreciation for Africa's beauty and the perspectives it offers to those who travel with open eyes.

---

*John Stevens is a professional safari guide and founder of John Stevens Guided Safaris Africa. A lifelong conservationist, he is also a founding member of Zambezi Elephant Fund, dedicated to protecting the wildlife and landscapes of the Zambezi Valley.*

*John Stevens*



Photo credit: Chris Sheppard



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# Who Are We?

**G**rand Air was launched in August 2022 by two young pilots, Bradley Hook and Bradley Thornton. They began the Grand Air Charter dream with one beloved C206 - Z-BVR.

As of November 2025 the ever growing Grand Air fleet is a strong 17 crafts, including King Airs, Caravans, Navajos, Barons and C210's. Between the Grand Air team, our pilots have an accumulated 37,000 flying hours under their belts.

Brad and Brad, or "B-Squared" as they are known, are both born and bred Zimbabwean, and both are married with a

beautiful pigeon pair each. Their wives, Louise and Lee-Anne are an integral, behind the scenes support to the Brads' as they grow Grand Air from strength to strength.

Grand Air's ethos is 'each passenger is to be given the warm Grand Air welcome, and every customer is King'.

Do not for a moment think that the Grand Air way is taught from behind two desks, our passengers are often flown to their destinations by one of the Brad's. Their hands-on approach to running Grand Air has made them a popular booking choice with agents, lodges and passengers alike.



**Above:** Captain Brad Hook and Captain Brad Thornton AKA 'Brad Squared'

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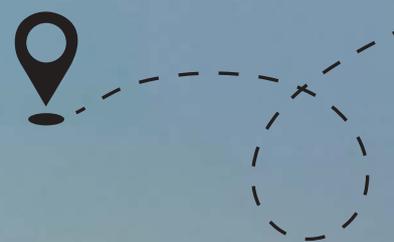
# AREAS OF OPERATION



ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE	FVRG	J.M.NKOMO	FVJN	VICTORIA FALLS	FVFA	CHARLES PRINCE	FVCP
KARIBA	FVKB	BUFFALO RANGE	FVCZ	HWANGE NATIONAL	FVWN	HWANGE MAIN	FVWT
MASVINGO	FVMV	BEITBRIDGE	FVBB	BIKITA	-	BINGA	FVBI
BISHOPSTONE	-	BOMANI	-	BUMI HILLS	FVBM	CAWSTON BLOCK	-
CHAPOTO	FVPO	CHAPUNGU	-	CHENJE	FVCJ	CHETE	FVCT
CHEWORE	FVCO	CHIKWENYA	FVCK	CHIMACHESE	-	CHIPINDA POOLS	-
CHIRUNDU	FVCD	CHISUMBANJE	-	CHIZARIRA	FVCR	DANDAWA	-
DANDAWA	-	DEKA	FVDE	DEVULI RANCH	FVDV	DRUMMOND	-
FALCON	-	FORTHERGILL	FVFG	GACHE GACHE	FVGG		
GIRAFFE SPRINGS	FVGS	GOKWE	FVGO	GWERU	FVGW	HIPPO VALLEY	FVHY
HUMANI	FVHR	KANJEDZA	FVKD	KANYEMBA/ GURUVE	FVBA	KARUNGA	-
KATIYO	-	KIRK	-	KOMANI	FVKM	KWEKWE	FVKK
LAMULAS	-	LIBUTI	-	LINKWASHA	FVLK	LONESTAR RANCH	FVLS
LUPANE	FVLN	MABALAUTA	-	MAHENYE	FVMH	MALIPATI	-
MANA POOLS	FVMN	MANA WEST	FVEM	MANGA	-	MARONDERA	FVMA
MARY ELLEN	-	MATETSI	-	MIDDLE SABU	FVMS	MLIBIZI	FVML
MOKORE	-						
MURARA	FVMR	MUROWA	-	MUTARE	FVMU	MWANJA	FVJA
NUANETSI	FVZI	NKAYI	FVNK	NOTTINGHAM	FVNT	PEDZAPASI	-
PAMUZINDA	-	RATELSHOEK	FVRA	RUKOMECHI	FVRK	RIFA WEST	FVRF
ROBINS CAMP	-	ROKARI / KIPLINGS	FVRI	SAUERDALE		SENGWA GORGE	
SANGO	-						
SENUKO	-	SHUMBA	-	SIJARIRA	FVSF	SIPEPA	-
TASHINGA	FVTA	TINFIELDS		TOWLA	-	UMTSHIBI	-
WADZE	FVWA	WAPE RANGE		WATERFALL	-		

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Speed 250 kts  
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Range 1 200 NM  
Payload 850 kgs  
Up to 9 PAX

### **2 x BEECHCRAFT BARON (BE58)**

Speed 165 kts  
Multi engine piston aircraft  
service ceiling 10 000 ft  
Range 1 000 NM  
Payload 400 kgs  
Up to 5 pax

### **4 x CESSNA CARAVAN (C208)**

Speed 155 kts  
Single engine turbine  
Aircraft service ceiling 10 000 ft  
Range 800 NM  
Payload 950 kgs  
Up to 12 pax

### **2 x CESSNA 210 (C210)**

Speed 145 kts  
Single engine piston aircraft  
Service ceiling 10 000 ft  
Range 700 NM  
Payload 350 kgs  
Up to 4 pax

### **3 x PIPER NAVAJO (PA31)**

Speed 165 kts  
Multi engine piston aircraft  
Service ceiling 10 000 ft  
Range 700 NM  
Payload 500 kgs  
Up to 7 pax

### **2 x CIRRUS (SR22)**

Speed 165 kts  
Single engine piston aircraft, with parachute (CAPS)  
Range 800 NM  
Payload 250 kgs  
Up to 3 pax



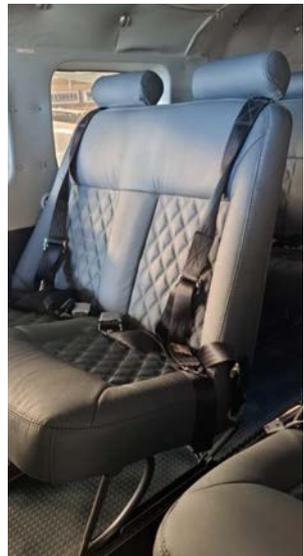
### KINGAIR 200 (BE20)

- Speed 250 kts
- Pressurised Multi Engine Turbine
- Service ceiling 28 000 ft
- Range 1200 NM
- Payload 850 kgs
- Up to 9 PAX



### CESSNA CARAVAN (C208)

- Speed 155 kts
- Single engine turbine
- Service ceiling 10 000 ft
- Range 800 NM
- Payload 950 kgs
- Up to 12 PAX



### PIPER NAVAJO (PA31)

- Speed 165kts
- Multi engine piston aircraft
- Service ceiling 10 000 ft
- Range 700 NM
- Payload 500 kgs
- Up to 7 pax



### BEECHCRAFT BARON(BE58)

- Speed 165kts
- Multi engine piston aircraft
- Service ceiling 10 000 ft
- Range 1000 NM
- Payload 400 kgs
- Up to 5 pax



### CESSNA 210 (C210)

- Speed 145kts
- Single engine piston aircraft
- Service ceiling 10 000 ft
- Range 700 NM
- Payload 350 kgs
- Up to 4 pax



### CIRRUS (SR22)

- Speed 165kts
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- Range 800 NM
- Payload 250 kgs
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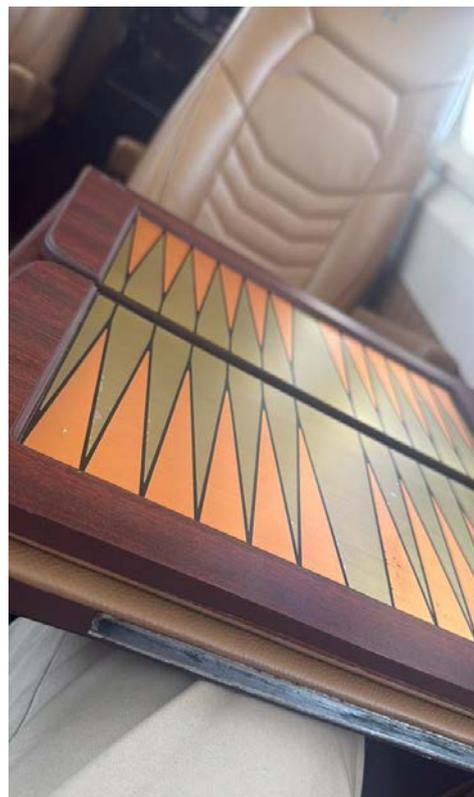
*'A pilot's Sweetheart'*

**W**hen one thinks of the lovely bird that is ZS-PNR, this statement resonates loudly with it. In the realm of technicalities, this aircraft left the factory as a normal Beechcraft King Air 200, and at Grand Air Charters it has proven to be an interesting bit more than that!

This aircraft is what I would call a pilot's sweetheart. It's fashioned with some well thought out upgrades and is a well polished and shined proverbial best tool in our GA umbrella.

Speed thrills, but it also gets you to your safari or medical evacuation destination quicker. PNR is fitted with the big guns when it comes to engines with top of the line Pratt and Whitney PT6A-61 power plants on both shiny wings. This huge boost in continuous power, along with the blades that pull it, the wing tip winglets, main landing gear doors and strakes in the rear bottom part of its sleek and aerodynamic body, translates to some very impressive performance in terms of overall speed and time to climb to altitude.

Now, don't be fooled to believe, it's just another piece of metal, designed to put smiles on the faces of those that





sit up front at the controls! For the passenger, this aircraft is a dream to be on. The interior speaks the language of luxury, with leather club seating type of configuration. This, with the very quiet cabin volume allows for normal chatter as you soar across the African sky. The state of the art cabin environment system will be sure to keep you comfortable both in temperature and in cabin altitude, ensuring that you arrive at your destination fresh and fully ready for the next adventure. Sun is a bit too much on one side? Say no more! With just a twist on the window, you'll be able to dim the amount of light getting into your eyes and before you know

it, you will be tempted to take a nap!

All in all, this aircraft is not just providing a trip, it's an entire experience that no one should ever miss. As a pilot I'm overjoyed knowing that as I'm flying this marvel of engineering excellence, my passengers in the back are probably having a memorable trip.

This is your Captain speaking, we look forward to welcoming you on board!

Vernon Mugodo



**'All animals are equal,  
but some are more  
equal than others.'**

- Animal Farm

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A Culinary Haven in Victoria Falls: The Butchers Daughter and Its Flavourful Legacy  
Nestled in the lush residential heart of Victoria Falls, a quiet culinary revolution is unfolding. What began as a humble butchery has blossomed into a trio of vibrant dining destinations - each uniquely crafted, yet united by a passion for quality, heritage, and the magic of good food. It all started in 2020 when Christine and her husband Brian founded The Butchers Daughter. Christine, herself the daughter of renowned Harare butchers Billy and Sandy, was inspired by her family's tradition of excellence. With Brian's support and a shared love for premium cuts, Christine turned that legacy into a thriving butcher-deli known for top-quality meats and its now-famous biltong, drawing loyal customers from Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana. As their reputation grew, so did their vision.

**La Piazza:** A Taste of the World Beneath the Trees  
Set beneath the spreading branches of mango trees, La Piazza is more than just a restaurant - it's a culinary escape. At its heart are two distinct kitchens, each offering a taste adventure.

The first is 310 on Parkway, where Euro-African cuisine takes center stage. Think premium steaks - sourced directly from The Butchers Daughter, but prepared with a fusion of European technique and bold local flavor. It's sophisticated, yet grounded in authenticity.

Then there's Oh So Sushi, a serene addition to Victoria Falls' food scene, bringing the precision and artistry of Japanese cuisine to the table. Originally established in Harare in 2016, this sushi bar opened at La Piazza in July 2024, offering delicate rolls, sashimi, and more, beautifully prepared and brimming with freshness.

Whether you're indulging in wood-fired pizza or sampling the elegant flavors of sushi, every bite is enhanced by the tranquil atmosphere and the scent of ripe fruit hanging in the air.



**The Social Kitchen:** Where Community Meets Cuisine

A stone's throw from the bustling town center lies The Social Kitchen, another gem in the Butchers Daughter collection. Laid-back and welcoming, it's a favorite for locals and travelers alike. Here, hospitality is as central to the experience as the food itself.

Guests rave about the Portuguese Chicken and the signature Maiale Pizza, and the curated menu caters to every mood, from hearty lunches to decadent desserts. It's the kind of place where you arrive for a quick coffee and end up staying for the company, the conversation, and maybe just one more bite.



### More Than Food—A Family Legacy

What unites these three distinct spaces is a singular philosophy: inspired by family, driven by passion. From Christine's roots in a traditional Harare butchery to the flourishing dining experiences she and Brian have created, the Butchers Daughter brand is built on quality, care, and an enduring love for food. Whether you're seeking a gourmet steak under the mango trees, fresh sushi with a view, or a cozy spot to connect with friends, The Butchers Daughter, La Piazza, and The Social Kitchen offer something rare in today's world, a meal that feels like coming home.

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# PROJECT REWILD

Photography by: Dereck and Beverly Joubert

**I**n the ongoing challenge of protecting endangered species, every success story counts. This one belongs to painted dogs. Earlier this month, a pack of these endangered canines was successfully relocated as part of Project Rewild, an initiative spearheaded by Dereck and Beverly Joubert and focused on restoring ecological balance and biodiversity through wildlife translocations.

This wasn't a simple relocation. It was a mission filled with unexpected turns, including the birth of puppies mid-operation, and countless moments of determination and care from a dedicated team of conservationists.



Today, these dogs are running free in a protected area, learning to hunt, strengthening their fragile bloodlines, and carving out a hopeful future. We are deeply grateful to our partners and support teams: Zimparks, Great Plains Conservation, African Wildlife Management & Conservation (AWMC), Dr. Jacqueline and Josh Mostert, NJ LaGrange, Grand Air Charters, and our Great Plains family, whose expertise and passion made this possible. The story captured in this video is not only one of relocation, but of resilience, innovation, and hope for the future of painted dogs.



Scan to watch  
the video!





*Wild Zimbabwe,  
Crafted for You*

**BOOK NOW**

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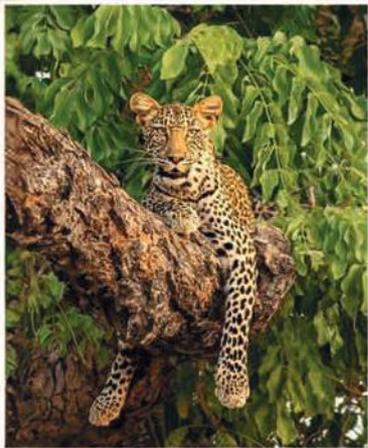
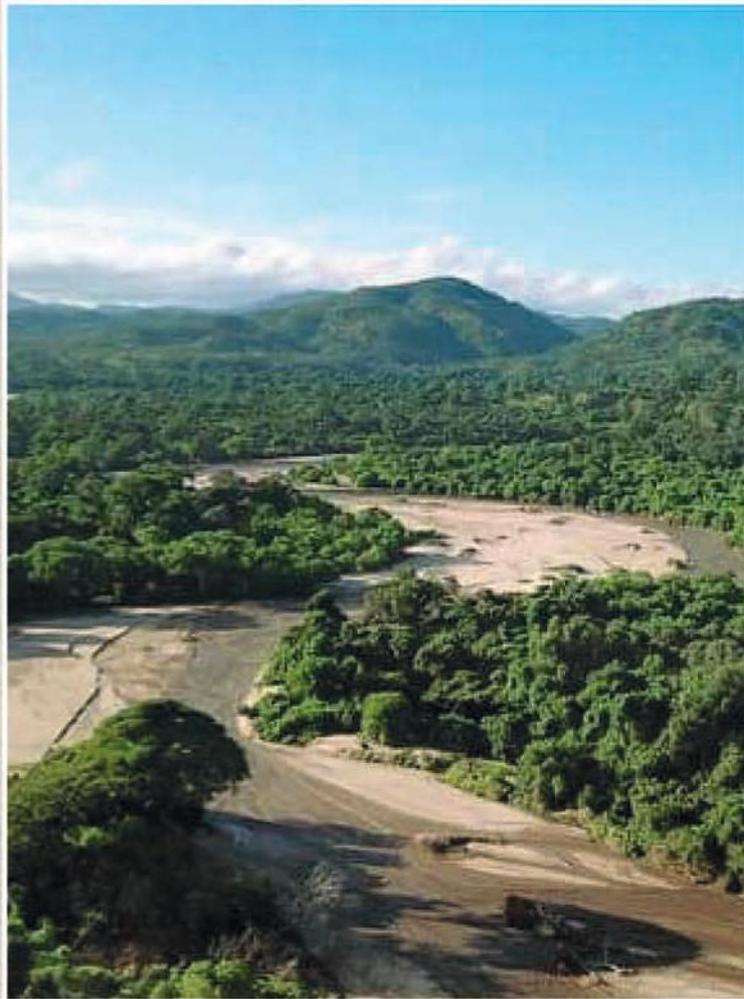
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- Makuti Mountain Camp
- Malindi Station Camp

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# DISCOVER THE UNTOUCHED WILD

Mhara River Bush Camp is nestled in wild, undisturbed bushland within Mana Pools National Park — Where no trees were cleared whilst building the camp and wildlife roams freely. Home to the rare African Pitta bird and abundant wildlife, the camp offers a deeply personal safari experience, tailor-made for every guest. Enjoy warm hospitality, unforgettable bush dinners, and nature at its most authentic.



# Back to The Bush

Photo credit: Chris Sheppard

**A**s a Zimbabwean who left the country and moved to Australia when I was five years old, being given the opportunity to return and work in the bush as a pilot for Grand Air was both wonderfully exciting and a little daunting.

Having lived in Australia for 25 years, I had never once returned to Zimbabwe - not even for a holiday - until September 2024, when my whole family made the trip back. We stayed in Mana Pools, Victoria Falls, Nyanga, and Harare. So, it's safe to say I didn't have much, if any, bush knowledge or experience.

My first charter with Grand Air took me deep into Hwange National Park - a beautiful, pristine area on the western side of the country. I was welcomed to The Hide by giraffe,

kudu, and buffalo, all in the same scene. That's when I knew I'd made the right decision to come to Zimbabwe and become a bush pilot. Staying in camps in the middle of national parks quickly became part of my daily routine, and I soon grew accustomed to having a wide variety of wildlife in very close proximity to my tent throughout the night - including lions and hyenas.

This brings me to one of my most heart-racing and unforgettable experiences, which happened while I was staying at Mana Sands Camp in Mana Pools. It was 12:15 a.m. on the 3rd of October, 2025. I was lying awake, listening to the beautiful sounds of a pride of lions in the distance. One of the lions seemed to be getting closer, moving from the right side of my tent to the left. Then the calls went silent.



Suddenly, a new sound filled the air - the terrified calls of impala. They were making an absolute ruckus. I wasn't sure what was happening until I heard the blood-curdling scream of one unfortunate impala being taken by what I could only assume was the lion I'd just heard moments earlier. It all sounded like it was happening barely ten metres from my tent. The noise was intense - and then, just as suddenly, everything went quiet.

Thinking the action was over, I lay back down and tried to sleep. But moments later, I heard sticks snapping just outside my tent. Sitting up quickly, I locked eyes with a large male lion standing on the deck right in front of me, a juvenile impala hanging from his jaws. My heart was racing. Channeling Jurassic Park, I stayed as still as possible. After what felt like an eternity, the lion decided I was no threat and dragged his kill across my deck toward the camp reception area.

Thinking it was finally safe, I reached for my phone, hoping to capture some of the action - until I noticed dark shadows moving around the tent, illuminated by the full moon. Six hyenas had arrived: four circling behind my tent and two following the blood trail across the deck. They were clearly planning to gang up and steal the lion's hard-earned dinner. The sounds that followed are something you have to hear in person to believe. Moments like these remind me just how special the African bush is - Zimbabwe in particular - a place that gives you stories you'll tell for the rest of your life.

Thank you, Grand Air, for bringing me here.

Rory Armstong



# GONAREZHOU

## AND THE RETURN OF BLACK RHINO

A book by Buck O'Donoghue and Joanna Craig





A steadfast figure in Zimbabwean aviation

# JOHN REID ROWLAND

In this edition of Tinobhuruka we would like to pay tribute to John, fondly known to aviators globally as 'JRR'

**J**ohn is a humble gentleman, yet an integral part of Zimbabwean aviation.

Not many pilots in these parts have not had dealings with John during their career into aviation stardom (which means they worked hard to get to be flying you today!)

John was born in Zimbabwe, and was educated at St. George's College in Harare. He went on to become a lawyer, and in 1973 found himself as a guest at the Mashonaland Flying Club – known as MFC. He has been a member of the club ever since. Incidentally, he has been served at the club bar all these years by the same barman, Pious, who has been in service at the MFC for the same number of years.

John caught the flying bug, and decided to become a pilot in 1973 "just for fun". Later, he became an instructor at MFC and after obtaining his CPL, became a freelance pilot.

After a stint in the army John was invited to join the Air Force where he spent 2 years in 3 Squadron flying the DC3, Islander, and C185.

JRR went on to bigger and faster toys when he joined Air Zimbabwe in 1981.

He held the position of 1st officer on the Viscount then the Boeing 707, returning to the Viscount as a captain. After leaving Air Zimbabwe in 1985 John spent some time in Australia, where he worked on the law side of the Australian Civil Aviation Authority – though managed while there to fly the Authority's Gulfstream Commanders over much of that vast country. More recently, John has worked closely with the Zimbabwean Civil Aviation Authority in an advisory role.

Ever the adventure seeker, John moved with his family to Hong Kong in 1988 and went on to do a 4-year stint flying for Air Hong Kong commanding the Boeing 707 into and out of the famous Kai Tak Airport.

Upon returning to Zimbabwe in the 90's John rejoined Air Zimbabwe for 3½ years, flying the Boeing 707 again, and in 1999 took up a position with MK Airlines as a cargo pilot. He thoroughly enjoyed this role for 11 years, flying DC8's and then Boeing 747's.



Above: 1982 Arrival HRE Air Zim JRR, Allan Fraser, Isobel Warren Codrington and Richard Larkins



Above: 1983 Malcolm Lane and JRR at hotel in Frankfurt



During his nearly 23000 hour career JRR has operated in to or out of about 253 airports in 80 countries outside Zimbabwe.

Bar a few of the newer airstrips in Zimbabwe, John has landed at over 180 airfields in Zimbabwe, at every corner of the country and his extensive knowledge makes him a "anything aviation go to guru" among pilots.

Currently you can find John on the airfield, either sorting out instructor ratings, instrument and type ratings as well as carrying out flight tests on behalf of the CAAZ and doing air tests and renewals of Certificates of Airworthiness.

The aviation community of Zimbabwe take pleasure in honouring this very crucial link in the chain and behalf of us all, we would like to say "thank you John for all that you have done, and continue to do to keep us safe in the Zimbabwean skies".

Facing page top left: JRR in plane on way to Angoche, somewhere north of Beira.

Facing page top right: Getting the VPWIG ready.

Top left: 2004 May B747 at Manston

Left: JRR Lagos bus

## JRR RECALLS MOCAMBIQUE TRIP IN THE 70'S

***A bit of background: at the time we went on this trip, the revolution had taken place in Portugal, led by General de Spinoza. Portugal had agreed to give its African colonies their independence. In respect of Mocambique, they had agreed to hand the country over to the left-wing movement, Frelimo, although there were other groups also fighting for Mocambique's independence. Frelimo established a one-party state once it was in power. No consultation with the people of Mocambique ever took place. The leader of Frelimo was Samora Machel, who became Mocambique's first president. The Portuguese were still nominally in control of the country when our trip took place.***

With all of 200 hours logged, and having held a PPL for about 16 months, I was asked to take some friends to northern Mozambique in a Cherokee 180 (VP-YXT) hired from Techair, one of the charter companies then operating at Charles Prince Airport. There were four of us. The instigator of the trip was Ron Dickenson, a historian from the University of Salisbury, who wanted to look for pottery and other historical items on the island of Angoche. Angoche was the site of an Arab settlement, which in the sixteenth century was known to be diverting gold from Sofala. The others were writer and journalist Philippa Berlyn and photographer Mike McGeorge.

We flew to Beira, then to Quelimane, and onward to Antonio Enes—the former Angoche, a town on the mainland. We spent several fascinating days there, both on the mainland and on the island. For the historian, the expedition was a success.

The day before we were planning to go home, the weather at Antonio Enes was miserable, with low clouds and drizzle. This now caused us some concern. I had originally intended to return the way we had come - to Quelimane, then Beira, then Salisbury. However, I did not fancy the idea of flying 250 miles through rain, so I thought of going Antonio Enes - Nampula - Chileka - Salisbury. Malawi normally required 72 hours' notice of the arrival of a foreign aircraft, so I thought we should telephone Nampula to ask them to

get clearance for us to go to Chileka. After a lot of phone calls to the controller at Nampula, we were told that Nampula airport was going to be closed the next day because the Camarada Presidente was arriving there. After further discussion, it turned out that it wasn't going to be closed all day, just for two hours before and after the President's arrival. If we got there before 1000 it would be all right. In fact we should be there earlier, at 0800. As a precaution, we got letters from the Antonio Enes police station and the local Frelimo office to say who we were,

We got to Nampula at about 8.30 the next morning. At briefing, we were told we could not go to Chileka; we would have to go via Tete. However, Frelimo had prohibited all flights in this part of the country. After much more discussion, phone calls and a lot of waiting, we were told "you can go." I dashed off a flight plan to Tete, giving Chileka as an alternate; we paid the landing fees without waiting for change. We got into the aircraft as quickly as we decently could and took off, without even doing a preflight check.

The flight to Tete should have taken three hours. The proposed route was from Nampula to overhead Sankulani in Southern Malawi, then due west over Malawi, then on track from where we left Malawi to Tete.



The first part of the flight was pleasant. We flew at FL 65. The radio calls were made at the appropriate times; Nampula said our alternate could be Beira, not Chileka. There was initially about three oktas of cumulus at FL 65; but gradually this increased so we descended to low level, flying on track among some spectacular hills. There was some rain. On we flew; the clouds got thicker, the hills higher, and eventually we could not see over the next rise. The choice was unattractive: turn back, or find somewhere to land. Not for anything would we go back to Nampula. I was thinking about finding my way back out of the hills and heading for Beira when Mike McGeorge, one of the passengers, said, "there is an airstrip."

The airstrip was about a mile to the right of track, and I turned towards it. There were some buildings near it; the place must have been a military base in Portuguese times. The airstrip was short, about 500 metres. The grass had recently been cut but had not been cleared off the runway.

I did a precautionary landing onto the strip, having flown low over it to check it. The first approach was too fast and the aircraft floated for too long, so we went round again. The second time we touched down about halfway along the strip. Hard braking brought the aircraft to a halt a short way into the grass at the end of the strip. It turned out later that this was part of the strip. Grass flew as we taxied back to the far end, where a large crowd had gathered.

The place was, as one might expect, a Frelimo camp. Many of the people there had weapons of various kinds, mostly AKs, but with a scattering of others.

One man gave us a black power type of salute as we taxied up. As we got out of the plane, the obvious leaders of the group came forward and shook hands with all of us. We explained what we were doing there. I wrote out a message in simple English for Phillippa to translate into Portuguese. This would be taken by bicycle to the nearest telephone, at Madale, some 40 km away and phoned through to Nampula. It was only then that we discovered the name of the place we were at - Muabanama. Muabanama does not appear on the maps I was using. It is about 90 nm from Chileka, on a bearing of about 110 degrees.



JRR and Phillippa with comrades.



'Soldiers' at Muabanama.

With the help of the people there we cleared the strip; it was now all of 500 m long, if that. However, from just looking at the aircraft, which now looked a fair distance away, and taking into account the elevation of the field – about 1 500 feet – I thought we should be able to get off easily enough.

We went to the camp, as it became obvious that the weather was not going to improve that day and we would be forced to stay the night there, a prospect none of us relished. However, all we could do was try to make the best of a bad situation.

Muabanama was a former Portuguese military base camp. Apart from the officers' quarters, it had a barrack room, a camp hospital, and other buildings. It used to have electricity (from a generator) and piped water. This had all gone. The generator did not work: no fuel. The water pump did not work: ditto. All water had to be brought by hand from the stream. If there ever was a telephone, it was no longer operating. The radio had been taken away by the Portuguese. There were no operating motor vehicles in the camp.

Bed at about eight o'clock; there was nothing else to do. Though tired, I hardly slept at all. Would the weather improve? The sound of rain did nothing to reassure me. Would we get off? If we had to stay another day, how could we tell our relatives at home? They expected us back the next day; and Techair expected their aircraft back.

The next day dawned grey and drizzly. Low clouds hung over the hills. It was impossible to go, even if the commandant had let us; and he did not want to do that until the messenger had come back from Madale, which he hadn't. I went to check the aircraft and the runway. The night's rain and drizzle had packed the dusty surface down a little. We cleared more grass off the strip, to make the first part of the take-off run straight. We lined the plane up and pushed her back as far as we could to get as long a run as possible.

After breakfast we went to the meeting the Frelimos were having with the locals. This was held in what used to be a barrack room. About 200 locals crowded in.

We did not stay for the whole proceedings, but the weather was improving all the time; the clouds were lifting and breaking; there were patches of sunlight. I told the comandante how important it was that we leave today, that we had to get to Tete at least.

When the proceedings in the barrack room were over, we had the photography session.

By midday it was obviously safe to fly; but the messenger still had not returned. After some persuasion, the commandant agreed to let us go; but first we must have lunch. We ate quickly, then packed. We left with our hosts packets of sugar, salt, tea and coffee, and tins of meat and jam. A letter was written by one of the officers and signed by the commandant, confirming our visit there.

The plane was checked; all OK. We loaded up, said our thanks and farewells, with both sincerity and relief. I did a short field take-off; engine to full power against the brakes, 10° of flap. At an IAS of 60 mph, raised the nose and apply another 15° of flap; she took off beautifully, well before the end. We circled over the camp, then set course for Tete.

I never thought I'd be glad to see Tete (the old airfield, not the current one), but we all were that day. They had no idea we were coming or overdue. We had fuelled, paid landing fees, and cleared customs in 20 minutes, and thankfully set course for home. It was good to see the Rhodesian border, even though we still had 140 miles to go.

When we came into Charles Prince, Les, the controller said "I thought you were never coming back." So did we, I thought.

# Celebrating 21 YEARS OF AMANZI EXCELLENCE

Join us in celebrating over two decades of unparalleled hospitality. Established in 2004, Amanzi Lodge has proudly served as a sanctuary of refined comfort, setting the standard for luxury accommodation in Harare for 21 remarkable years.

**Unique, individually themed rooms:** Each of our luxurious rooms is distinctively designed and themed after a different African country, offering a unique journey with every stay.

**Supporting African art and culture:** Discover an exquisite collection of art and sculptures thoughtfully placed throughout the lodge and our spectacular gardens.

**Stunning landscaped gardens:** The grounds are a major highlight, featuring waterfalls, rare cycads, and an abundance of birdlife, creating a truly serene atmosphere.

**Acclaimed restaurant:** Indulge in the finest dining experience in Harare at our renowned restaurant, amanzi @amanzi, open for residents and visitors alike.

**Excellent facilities:** This includes a swimming pool, all-weather tennis court, a spa and gym, as well as conference facilities, all accessible to non-residents for a fee.

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[www.amanzi.co.zw](http://www.amanzi.co.zw)





# Life After Looking for Landmines

**F**rom its humble beginnings in Harare in mid-2005, The Development Initiative Ltd (TDI) is committed to helping those who are at risk of explosive devices. For two decades, TDI has cleared landmines and unexploded ordnance in multiple countries across Africa and the Middle East.

At TDI, all our staff are critical to its smooth operation, including our specialist detection dogs. These dogs are explicitly trained to work with their handlers to detect explosives and landmines. Every day, these dogs support our humanitarian, commercial and government clients in the countries in which we operate. Much of TDI's work is in challenging and hot environments so we largely use Springer Spaniels, Belgian Malinois, German Shepherds and Labrador Retrievers, depending on the location of each project. These dogs have strong nerves, are energetic, agile and in excellent physical condition. The trust between them and their handlers is second to none.

When these dogs come to the natural end of their professional lives, usually after about eight to ten years, they retire and are rehomed to loving families. Before the dogs are adopted, interested families, whether TDI staff or not,



**Top:** TDI's EDD team.  
**Middle right:** TDI's MDD team.  
**Right:** Searching for explosives.

are vetted to determine if they meet the requirements. This is a critical step in ensuring the well-being and happiness of TDI's retired working dogs. Charlie and Korado are two such examples of what happens to our working dogs when they are ready to hang up their harnesses in retirement! They were both adopted by separate families in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Charlie, a sprightly Springer Spaniel met his future owner, Malcolm, whilst they were both working for TDI in South Sudan. Based in the same camp, Malcolm spent time with the dogs every evening after work, getting to know them. Charlie and Korado were to eventually retire, and Malcolm knew that they would be looking for their forever homes. Charlie's handler would bring him to visit Malcolm every Sunday at his tent; perhaps an unobtrusive way to help convince Malcolm to offer a home to Charlie! It was not long before Charlie worked his way into Malcolm's heart and was adopted. He had a forever home waiting for him in Zimbabwe!

Malcolm's decision to adopt Charlie prompted his colleague Stanley, to adopt Korado, a German Shepherd. Stanley was so excited to bring Korado home and this excitement was equally felt within his family, especially his son, who loved the idea of finally having a "police dog" of his own.

Once all of the paperwork is completed and it is time to travel to their new homes, the TDI dogs are loaded in their crates, along with their passports, vaccination records and all of their familiar toys, and taken to the airport where they fly to their final destination. Being the feisty dog that he is, Korado chewed two travel crates, his water bowl and his leash, delaying two flights to Zimbabwe. Stanley's family were eager to meet him and it would seem that Korado shared in this excitement! With two new crates in tow, Korado and Charlie resumed their journey to Zimbabwe from South Sudan.



**Top:** Charlie at his new home.

**Above:** Korado in South Sudan.

Charlie and Korado eventually arrived safely in Harare, and onwards to their last stop in Bulawayo. They have settled well into Malcolm and Stanley's families, and both love all of the attention that they receive!

Although the dogs are no longer based in working environments when arriving at their new homes, adoptive families are encouraged to try keep to their routine as much as possible, providing them with regular exercise, training and veterinary care. To help ease the transition into their forever homes, the dogs are sent with their toys and kongs; highly durable canine toys, which they are familiar with from their time spent in the field.

During their years of service with TDI, these dogs and their handlers have searched and helped clear thousands of kilometres of land for the safety of others. They deserve to spend their golden years in the comfort of loving homes so TDI strive to find the best suited families for them so that they can thrive in their retirement!



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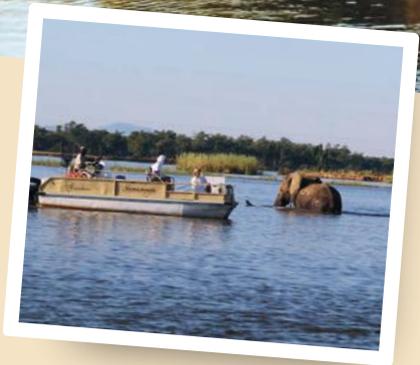
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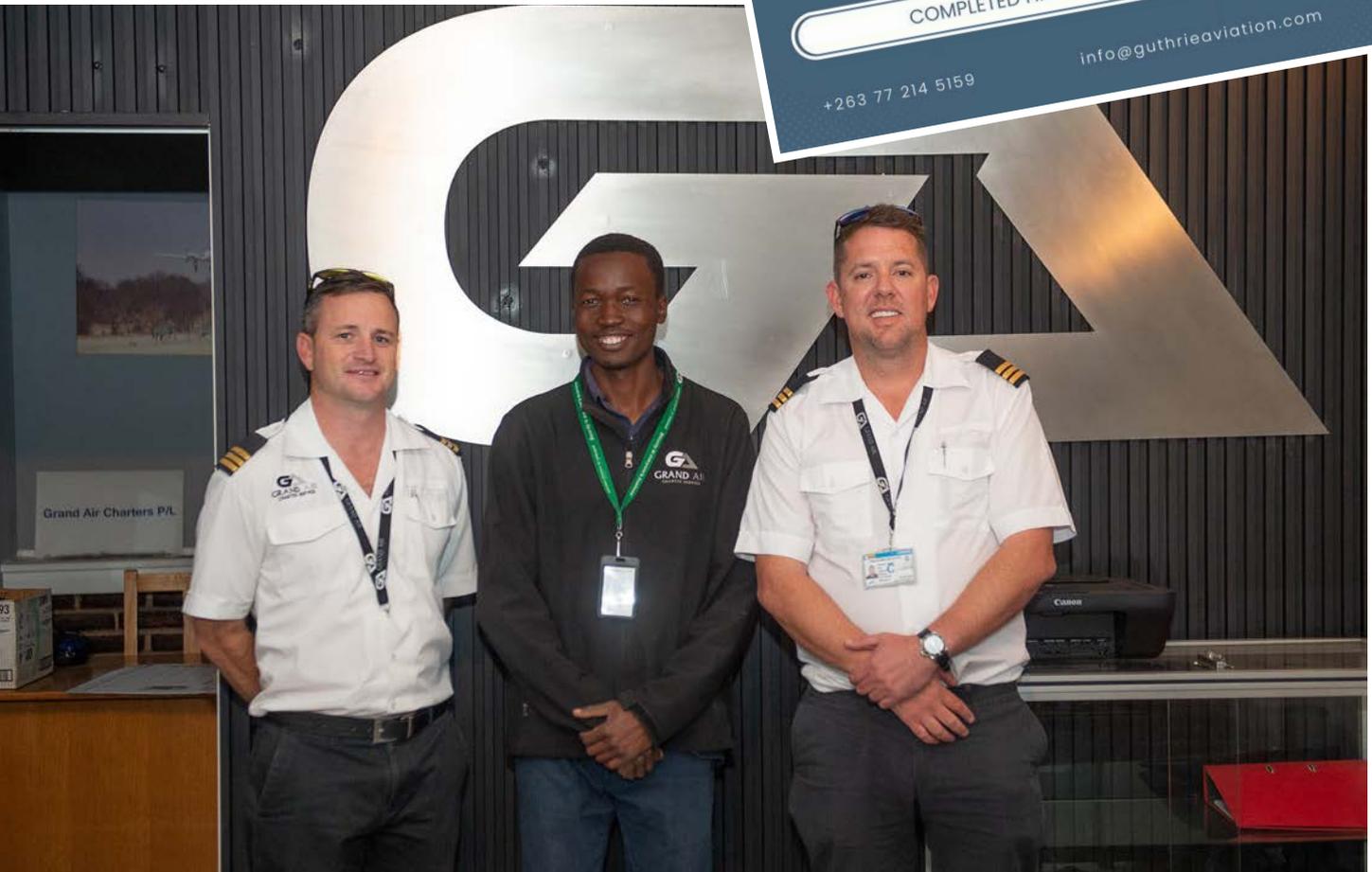
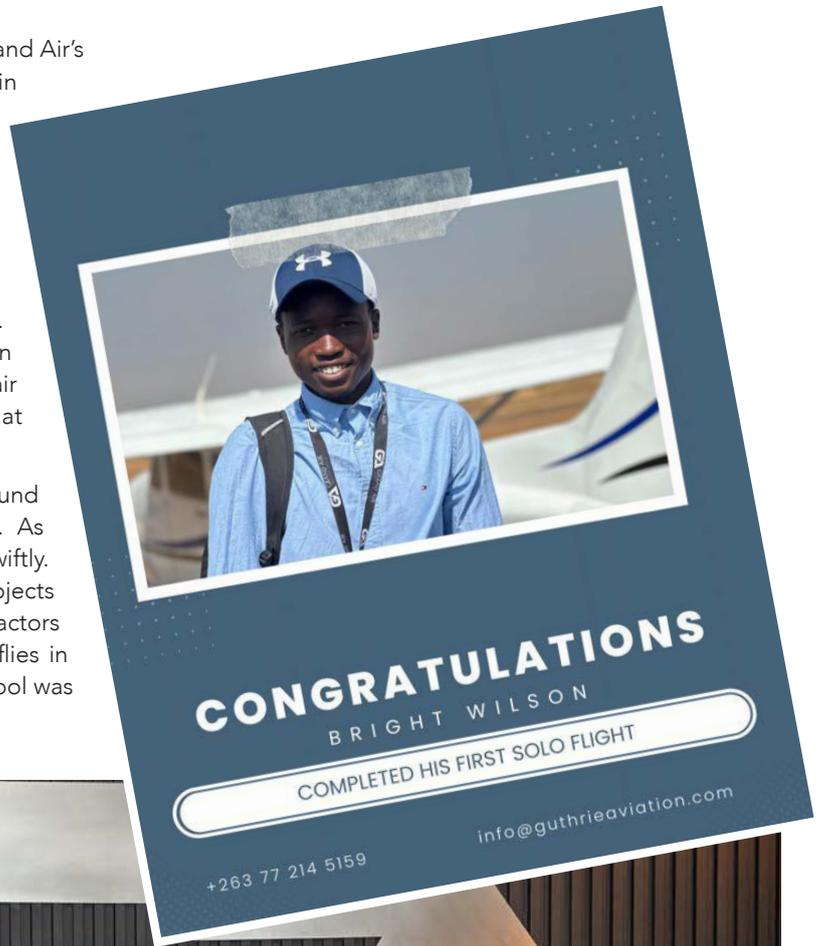
# BRIGHT WILSON

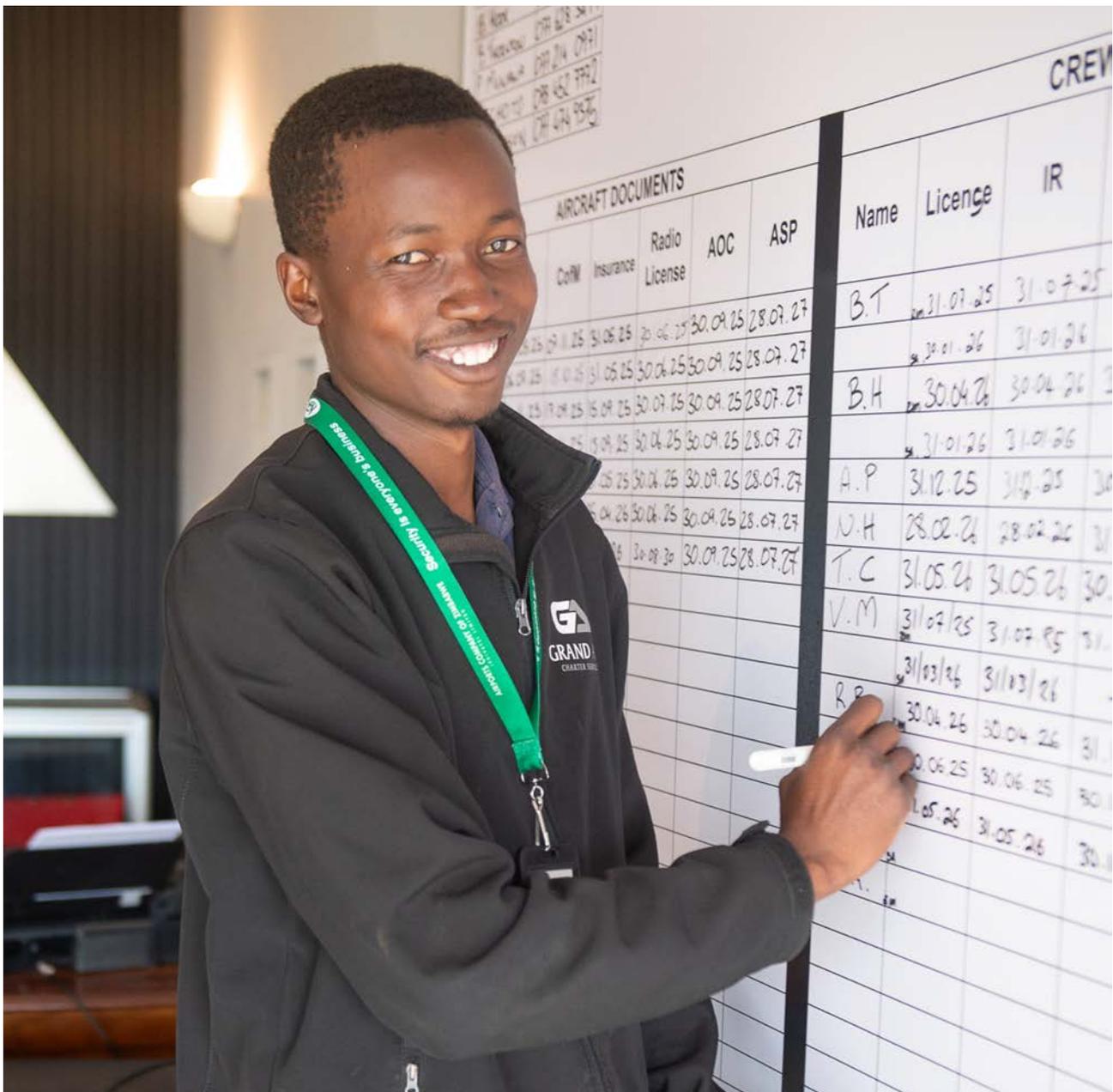
## ‘The Journey to My First Solo’

An update on Bright Wilson, who is Grand Air’s hangar assistant. We featured Bright in edition one of Tinobhuruku when we told his story. A young man who has been gifted tuition fees for a Private Pilots Licence. In this issue we caught up with Bright to find out about his experiences so far, and to get the scoop on the all important FIRST SOLO

“My journey to solo is one I remember vividly. I recall walking into Guthrie Aviation’s reception with Mr Thornton, the gentle hum of the air conditioner and the bubbly energy of the lady at the reception desk.

After enrolling, I received my gear and ground school was set to begin the following week. As ground school commenced, the days moved swiftly. I was learning a lot of new things in various subjects from how flight affects the body in human factors to how and why an aircraft generates lift and flies in principles of flight. Before I knew it, ground school was over and it was time to tackle the exams.





I dedicated myself to studying, often pulling sleepless nights and long days to review the material before each exam. It paid off, and with the help of the pilots at Grand Air, who were always willing to lend a hand, I completed the exams in a brief period.

The feeling of my first flight lesson was surreal. Knowing I was in control of the aircraft and actually flying was an awesome feeling!

Thanks to my excellent flight instructors, I progressed swiftly and soon reached the point where I was close to my first solo. I knew I was close based on my progress report, but I had no idea when exactly it would be.

To my surprise, on September 16th, after executing three circuits and an engine failure after take-off exercise, my instructor jumped onto the frequency and requested to stop abeam the tower.

After a short briefing, he jumped out of the aircraft and told me to do him proud.

My heart was racing as I taxied down to the holding point for my run up checks. As I went through the checks, I had to calm myself down and remind myself that I was ready.

After getting ATC clearance, I lined up on the runway, ensured all parameters were in the green, and applied full power. I let go of the brakes, and the aircraft accelerated down the runway.

My speed built up, and I gently pulled on the yoke. I was airborne! The feeling was indescribable. I was doing this on my own! But before getting carried away...

I focused on my downwind checks, followed by the base turn and final approach. It was now in my hands to bring the aircraft safely back onto the ground. I ensured my speed was good, and after touching down on the runway, I felt incredibly proud of myself albeit a bit sweaty due to the emotions, but I had really done it! I had completed my first solo!"



# HAPPY 21ST BIRTHDAY, AMANZI!

**A**fter 21 remarkable years in business, there's every reason to celebrate at Amanzi.

Let's take a walk down memory lane. In 2000, Amanzi Restaurant first opened its doors on Enterprise Road, bringing a fresh and vibrant dining experience to Harare. Just four years later, in 2004, Amanzi Lodge was launched in leafy Kambanji, adding an oasis of tranquility to the city's hospitality scene.

After weathering the storm of Covid - and staying buoyant for two challenging years - Amanzi Restaurant made an exciting move to the lodge, becoming Amanzi@Amanzi. Our original site went on to become the well-loved Khaya Nyama Wombles.

We never stopped - only moved forward. One door closed, and another opened, filled with flair, intrigue, and panache. Today, Amanzi@Amanzi welcomes all foodies to our restaurant at Amanzi Lodge, No. 1 Masasa Lane, Kambanji, whether you are staying with us or not.



## A LEGACY OF MOMENTS

Over the years, Amanzi has been home to countless special events and memories. Thursday nights, once quiet in Harare, came alive thanks to our live music - Jamming at Amanzi on a Thursday night - a tradition that transformed the city's social calendar.

There were our Sunday roasts, musical picnics supporting films and charities, quiz nights with Simba, African art exhibitions showcasing emerging talent, Friday food markets bringing the community together, as well as fashion shows, theatre, not forgetting weddings and corporate events.

Everyone has an Amanzi memory. And at the heart of them all is you - our loyal customers. From entrepreneurs to sports personalities, politicians to celebrities, and our most faithful local regulars - you have made this journey possible. Thank you.

## CHANGING THE SCENE

When we first arrived in 1997, Harare's restaurants were mostly tucked inside shopping arcades. We wanted to be different. We created a botanical garden with a cascading waterfall, attracting indigenous birdlife, and showcasing many special cycads, bromeliads and palms, offering guests peace and tranquility alongside world-class dining. Today, you'll notice that many restaurants have followed our lead - water features have become a hallmark of the city's dining spaces.



**INSPIRING TASTES AND TRAVELS**

From the beginning, our aim was to introduce fusion cuisine to Harare. Our menus have always carried a global flair - Nigerian pepper soup, groundnut stews, Thai curries, Indian spices, Moroccan tagines, and European classics. We even planted our own plantain trees, now available through Amanzi Plant Nursery.

At Amanzi Lodge, every guest can embark on an African journey without leaving Harare. Each room is themed around a different African country - 16 in total - celebrating the culture, colours, and artistry of the continent.



**THE STORY CONTINUES**

The adventure is far from over. Amanzi@Amanzi remains open to the public for lunch and dinner, taking diners on a culinary journey around the world.

Join us as we toast to 21 years of passion, creativity, and community - and to many more to come.

To join the Amanzi family and to hear about our specials and discounts for 2026, scan our social media QR codes and give us a follow.



amanzim



Amanzi



# SPURWING ISLAND



## ACCOMMODATION:

At Spurwing Island, we deeply value the importance of family time and have cultivated a truly family-friendly camp. To ensure peace of mind and a safe environment for all our guests, the perimeter of the camp is secured with an electric fence. We understand that families come in all shapes and sizes, with varying needs and budgets, which is why we offer a range of accommodation options. From cozy cabins perfect for fishing enthusiasts, to luxurious tents that blend comfort with the beauty of the outdoors, and spacious, family-friendly chalets designed with your needs in mind, we have something to suit everyone at Spurwing Island.



## ACTIVITIES:

Adventure awaits around every corner. Our diverse range of activities ensures there's something for everyone to enjoy. Embark on thrilling game drives through the wilderness, encountering the local wildlife in their natural habitat. For a more intimate experience, join our guided game walks and discover the smaller wonders of nature. Anglers can cast their lines and try their luck at fishing, while those seeking relaxation can opt for leisurely boat cruises, soaking in the stunning scenery. Regardless of your chosen activity, our knowledgeable guides will be with you every step of the way, enriching your experience with their expertise and passion for the island.



## FUNCTIONS:

At Spurwing Island, we understand that life's special moments deserve an extraordinary setting. Whether you're planning a milestone birthday celebration, a dream wedding, or a signature event that demands attention, our island paradise offers the perfect canvas. Imagine exchanging vows or toasting to another year with the breathtaking Matusadona mountain range as your majestic backdrop. With its unparalleled beauty and tranquility, Spurwing Island ensures an unforgettable experience for you and your guests.

Escape the ordinary and discover the untouched paradise of Spurwing Island, a secluded sanctuary nestled in the heart of Lake Kariba, Zimbabwe. Here, the promise of an unforgettable African adventure beckons, offering an immersive experience designed to rejuvenate your soul. Imagine embarking on exhilarating game drives, casting your line for the catch of a lifetime, or drifting across tranquil waters on a sunset cruise as the African sun paints the sky with vibrant hues.

Spurwing Island goes beyond the ordinary, indulging you in luxurious accommodation and the comforting taste of good, home-cooked cuisine. Our dedicated team is committed to catering to your every need, ensuring a seamless and personalized experience from arrival to departure. Book your escape to Spurwing Island today and create memories that will last a lifetime. Visit

[SpurwingIsland.com](http://SpurwingIsland.com) for exclusive offers and start planning your dream getaway to this hidden gem in the heart of Africa.

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## WINGS TRAVEL BUREAU: Zimbabwe's Trusted Compass in the Sky Since 1995

In a world where travel can often feel impersonal and rushed, Wings Travel Bureau stands proudly as a beacon of warmth, expertise, and reliability. Established in November 1995 and operating under the name Lombard Safaris, Wings Travel has grown into a multi-award-winning agency - one that Zimbabwean travellers and international clients alike trust with their most important journeys.

Headquartered in Harare with a dedicated branch office and a tightly knit team of professional consultants, Wings Travel has carved out a reputation for delivering not just bookings, but experiences - crafted with care, tailored to the traveller,

and backed by almost three decades of industry leadership. Whether you're planning a family holiday, corporate trip, diplomatic mission, or once-in-a-lifetime adventure, Wings Travel offers end-to-end travel management that goes well beyond flights and hotel reservations. Their personalized approach ensures that every touchpoint - from ticketing to visa services, from medical insurance to frequent flyer program management - is handled with efficiency, clarity, and a deeply human touch.

Manageress Laura Evans, who joined the company the year it opened and took the helm in 2006, leads the team with distinction. Her vast experience, multiple international accreditations, and leadership roles - such as serving as Chairperson and Treasurer for the Association of Zimbabwe Travel Agents (AZTA), and current Secretary for Skal International Harare - underscore the credibility and professionalism at Wings' core. Her dedication is echoed by an award-winning team that includes specialists, all of whom bring their own accolades and client-first approach to the table.



*The Wings Travel Bureau team - bringing over two decades of award-winning service and dedication to every journey.*

Wings Travel's services span the entire journey. They are IATA-accredited and well-versed in managing both domestic and international travel. Their extensive offerings include:

- **Flight reservations** with optimized connections and competitive pricing
- **Visa processing** for destinations such as the UAE and beyond
- **Medical travel insurance** - with complimentary yellow fever booklets for ticketed clients
- **Hotel bookings** - ranging from lodges and resorts to self-catering apartments
- **Car hire** - whether you need an economical ride or luxury sedan
- **Tours and holiday packages** - crafted to suit all pockets
- **Frequent flyer mile management** - ensuring you make the most of your loyalty rewards

More than just a service provider, Wings Travel has become a trusted partner to major institutions across Zimbabwe. These relationships are built on consistency, responsiveness, and an unwavering commitment to professionalism.

It is no surprise that Wings Travel has accumulated numerous industry accolades - such as the 2023 Tsalumba National Travel & Tourism Award for Travel Agency of the Year, and multiple recognitions from South African Airways, British Airways, Emirates, and Amadeus, among others.

In today's unpredictable world, having a travel partner you can count on is more essential than ever. Wings Travel not only rises to the occasion, but consistently goes the extra mile - whether by handling urgent last-minute reissues, finding creative flight alternatives, or offering a comforting voice during travel disruptions.

Visit them at [www.wings.co.zw](http://www.wings.co.zw), or connect via their active Facebook page, Wings Travel Bureau, where clients share their reviews, updates, and globetrotting inspiration. With Wings, travel is more than a destination - it's an experience, guided by the steady hand of experts who care.

So, wherever you're headed - be it the wild savannahs of Africa, the neon buzz of Dubai, or the timeless streets of Rome - travel with confidence. Travel with Wings.





# Safari, Sustainability and a Family Story

Nottingham Estate blends relaxed luxury with the rhythms of a working citrus farm and private safari landscape. From elephant encounters at dusk to quiet mornings on the river, every stay is thoughtfully curated while leaving space for freedom, comfort and discovery.

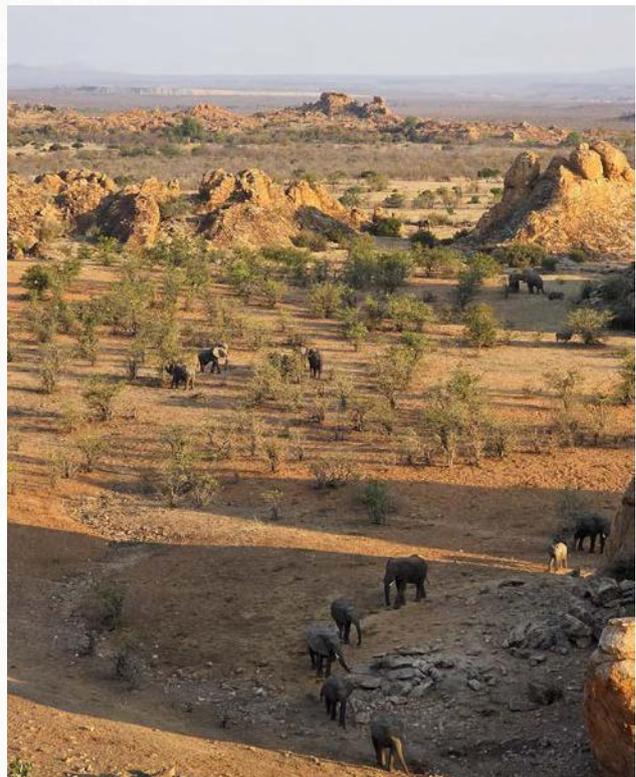
Set on the banks of the Limpopo River, where open plains meet ancient rock formations, Nottingham Estate is a family-run Citrus & safari destination that blends the ease of a well-crafted experience with the warmth of something deeply personal. Founded in 1953, the Estate offers close-up elephant encounters, vast African sunsets and relaxed luxury in a private setting. Guests enjoy thoughtfully packaged safari experiences while still feeling the freedom to slow down, shape their days and connect with the land. From sunrise on the river to evenings around the fire beneath star-filled skies, Nottingham delivers an African safari that feels effortless yet authentic.

## A Family Story and Comfortable Bases

The Estate's history is visible in every corner. The first citrus trees were planted in 1958, and the working landscape of orchards remains part of daily life. Over the years the family added guest spaces with care: Kuduland (1980) brings guests closer to the wild edge, while Nottingham Retreat (2006) offers a quieter, intimate base for relaxation and exploration. Both camps provide Wi-Fi and air conditioning, so guests return from the bush to contemporary comfort without losing the sense of place.

## Bespoke Small-Group Experiences

Nottingham is ideal for bespoke small groups, with itineraries tailored to your party's interests - elephant watching, game drives, fishing, guided walks, and the luxury of a dedicated chef who crafts menus around your tastes and the day's freshest produce. Private braais on the Limpopo banks, candlelit dinners at Flycamp, and relaxed lunches at Shrew Rock are arranged to feel personal and effortless. The Estate specialises in creating moments that match the pace and preferences of each group.





### Signature Moments and Seasonal Highlights

The Flycamp, built in 1993, remains one of the Estate's most evocative settings: imagine dining as the sun slips behind the horizon while elephants move slowly along the sandstone outcrops - a memory that lingers. Elephant feeding is seasonal, with the best viewing between May and late September to early October, when animals gather and the light is at its most striking. For early risers, a sunrise breakfast on a pontoon on Mashilichokwe Dam offers a serene way to watch the water and the bush come alive. Fishing on Mashilichokwe Dam is another relaxed option for groups who want a quieter day by the water.

### Agriculture, Packhouse Tours and Natural Heritage

Nottingham's agricultural roots remain central to its identity. During harvest season guests can join packhouse tours to see how oranges are prepared for export - an insider look at the logistics and care that take fruit from orchard to global markets. These seasonal tours add a practical, hands-on dimension to a stay and highlight the Estate's working landscape. The property also invites guests to read the land: guided walks reveal a diverse array of rock art and fossils, turning the bush into an open-air classroom where each panel and stone tells a story of deep time.

### Final Impression

More than a destination, Nottingham Estate feels like a lived-in family story: citrus orchards beside wild plains, a solar farm powering quiet luxury, and hosts who shape experiences around what your group values most. Whether you come for elephants at dusk, a pontoon breakfast at sunrise on Mashilichokwe Dam, a private braai beneath a star-filled sky, or a hands-on look at the packhouse in season, the Estate offers a rare blend of authenticity, comfort and conscience-crafted for small groups who want the bush on their own terms.



### Sustainability and Practical Details

Modern comforts sit alongside a strong conservation ethic. Nottingham is energy neutral: an on-site solar farm supplies power to the property and pushes surplus electricity back into the national grid. This commitment to low-impact operations is reflected in everyday practices and in the way hosts design guest experiences. The Estate suits travellers who want privacy, flexibility and a curated safari for a small group. Bookings for Flycamp, Shrew Rock, packhouse tours in season and bespoke meals are recommended to secure the best times and locations.





DEBBY HART:

## Contemporary Wildlife and Figurative Works in Living Color

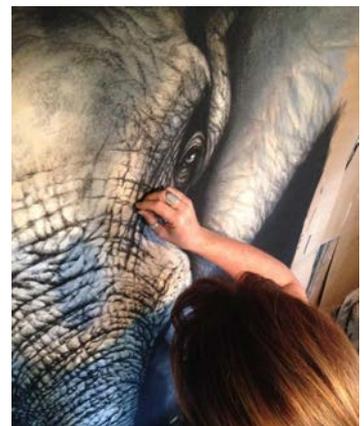
**D**eppy Hart - a Zimbabwean artist, brings the animal kingdom and human moments to life with a rare blend of observation, empathy, and exuberant color. Her contemporary wildlife and figurative paintings capture the spirit of her subjects - graceful, curious, and unmistakably alive while inviting viewers to see the natural and human world through a painter's rich imagination.

Hart's remarkable works have earned her wide spread recognition, appearing in Royalty and Presidential dwellings as well as countless lodges and private collections in Dubai, Boston, Houston, New York, Russia, Greece, Ireland, UK, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Her art resonates with animal lovers, art lovers, and eclectic audiences alike, bridging scientific appreciation with emotional resonance.



All of Hart's works are created with either soft chalk pastels or mixed media, and she often notes a unique tactile influence in her process: this extraordinary artist has no fingerprints on her right-hand thumb and two fingers from rubbing chalk pastels, which leads her to register different marks by using different parts of her hand. This distinctive and unique touch shapes the texture and mark making across her pieces.

[www.debbhartartist.com](http://www.debbhartartist.com)



# Wings Travel Bureau

## Experience the World with Confidence and Care



Laura Evans, Manageress

For over three decades, **Wings Travel Bureau** has been Zimbabwe's trusted name in travel — turning dream destinations into unforgettable experiences. Established in **November 1995** as Lombard Safaris, Wings has grown into a **multi-award-winning agency** renowned for warmth, reliability, and world-class service.

Based in **Harare** with a passionate team of expert consultants, Wings Travel isn't just about bookings — it's about crafting journeys with care. Whether you're planning a **family getaway**, a **corporate trip**, or a **luxury escape**, their team delivers seamless, personalized travel management from start to finish.



Wings Travel Team



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0712 608 160  
0710 872 899  
0710 872 900  
0242 708 661&5  
08677 004 110

At the helm is **Laura Evans**, a seasoned professional who joined Wings the year it opened and became **Manageress in 2006**. Her leadership, backed by international accreditations and roles in industry bodies such as **AZTA** and **Skal International Harare**, reflects Wings' commitment to excellence. Under her guidance, the agency has built a reputation for precision, integrity, and that all important human touch.

**Wings Travel is IATA-accredited and offers a full suite of services**



Flights

Hotel Reservations



Frequent flyer

Tour packages



Travel insurance

Car Hire



Visa assistance

Our professionalism and consistency have earned us the trust of top institutions across Zimbabwe — and a trophy shelf of accolades, including the **2023 Twalumba National Travel & Tourism Award for Travel Agency of the Year**. Leading airlines like **Emirates**, **British Airways**, **South African Airways**, and **Travelport** have also recognized Wings for outstanding performance.

In today's fast-paced world, having a travel partner who truly cares makes all the difference. Wings Travel goes above and beyond — managing urgent reissues, creative flight solutions, and even providing a reassuring voice during travel disruptions.



Wherever you're headed — from the wild plains of Africa to the glittering lights of Dubai — travel with confidence. **Travel with Wings.**

# Shamashanga



## WHERE FISHING AND WILDLIFE MEET ON THE WATER

Nestled along the pristine banks of one of Zimbabwe's most productive waterways, Shamashanga Camp offers a safari experience that is both tranquil and thrilling. This exclusive riverside camp is best known for its exceptional fishing opportunities and the rare chance to view Africa's wildlife from the unique perspective of the water. Whether casting a line at sunrise or gliding silently past game on a boat cruise, Shamashanga delivers unforgettable moments for anglers and nature lovers alike.

Fishing is at the heart of the Shamashanga experience. The camp is perfectly positioned on waters renowned for their healthy fish populations, making it a premier destination for both seasoned anglers and first-time fishers. Guests can enjoy catch-and-release tiger fishing, widely regarded as one of Africa's most exciting freshwater angling challenges. Known for their speed, strength and acrobatic fights, tiger fish provide an adrenaline-filled experience that keeps anglers coming back year after year.

In addition to tiger fish, the river is home to a variety of other species including bream, chessa and vundu, offering diverse fishing options throughout the year. Fishing excursions are conducted from well-equipped boats with experienced guides who have an intimate knowledge of the river's channels, eddies and hotspots. Whether fly fishing, spinning or conventional rod and reel fishing, guests are guided every step of the way to ensure a rewarding and responsible angling experience.



*Tiger Fish (Hydrocynus vittatus)*

# A Gallery of Zimbabwean Birds

Photography by the talented guide Jim Mackie

## Woodland Kingfisher

Recognisable by its electric-blue wings and soft brown body, the Woodland Kingfisher is as striking as it is vocal. Its loud, laughing call is a familiar sound in summer woodlands and riverine forests across southern Africa, where it feeds on insects, small reptiles and amphibians.

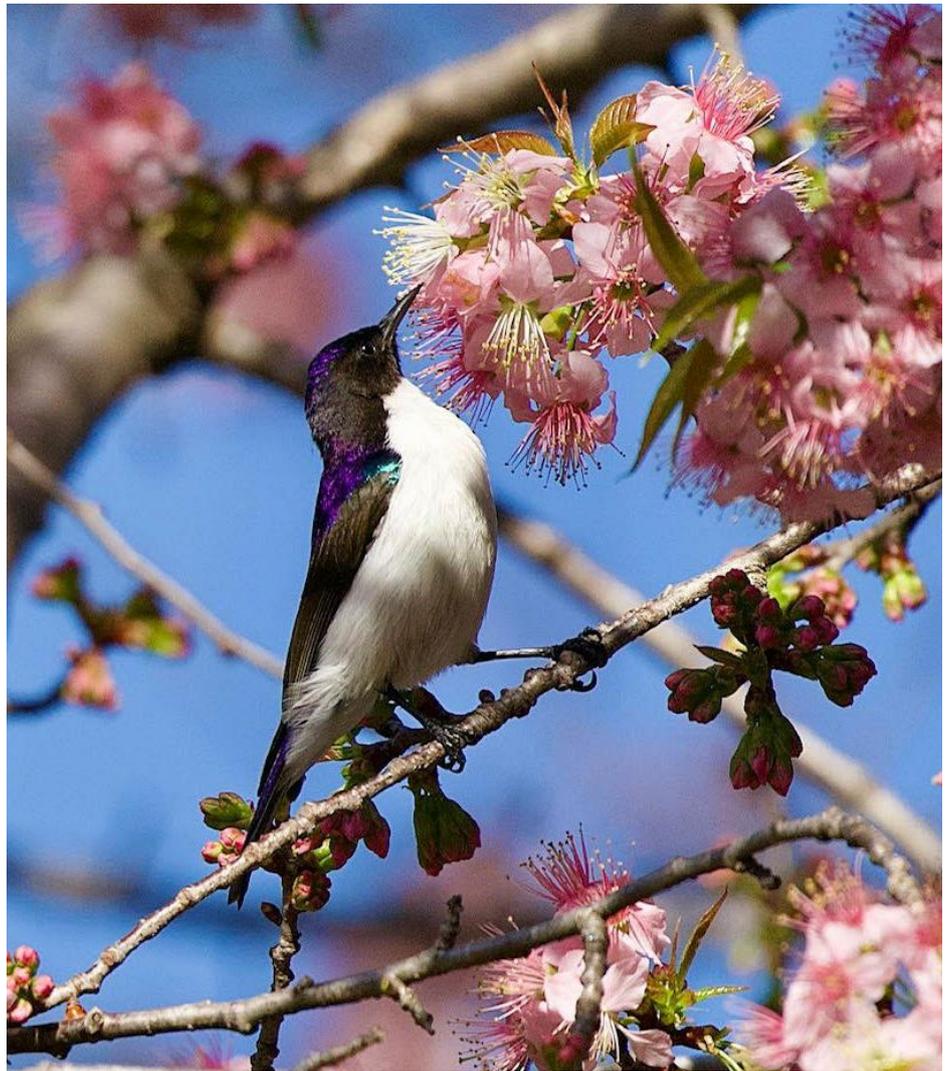


## Silvery-cheeked Hornbill

Large and unmistakable, the Silvery-cheeked Hornbill is defined by its glossy black plumage, pale silvery facial patches and impressive curved bill. Often seen gliding between tall trees, it plays a vital role in forest ecosystems by dispersing seeds from the fruits it feeds on.

## Western Violet-backed Sunbird

This small but dazzling bird flashes brilliant violet and emerald-green plumage in the sunlight. The Western Violet-backed Sunbird is an energetic nectar-feeder, flitting between flowers in woodland and garden habitats, while also helping with pollination as it feeds.



## Crowned Eagle

Powerful and commanding, the Crowned Eagle is one of Africa's most formidable birds of prey. With bold black-and-white markings and a striking crest, it inhabits dense forests where it hunts medium-sized mammals, ruling the canopy with strength and precision.

# The Zambezi Elephant Fund (ZEF)

The Zambezi Elephant Fund, founded in 2015 by John and Nicci Stevens, and Richard Maasdorp, was created in response to a resource shortage for Anti-poaching efforts in the mid to lower Zambezi valley. At the time of its inception, there was a massive upsurge in elephant poaching in the Zambezi Valley, and the fear was that, should this continue unchecked, elephant populations would run the risk of suffering the same fate as that of Rhino in the Zambezi Valley. Rhinos have been locally extinct in the Zambezi since the late 80s, at one time this would have been inconceivable, now it is a reality.

Happily, due to changes in the situation in the valley, Zambezi Elephant Fund (ZEF) has changed in its strategy and primary objectives as the needs on the ground have changed. Through the stellar efforts of National Parks and associated Impact partners, the elephant poaching situation has largely stabilised, and whilst we may never be rid of the poaching threat, it is at a more manageable level. Consequently, this has allowed ZEF to broaden its horizons somewhat. The focus has shifted to a landscape-level intervention strategy utilizing multiple organizations as impact partners. In this way, ZEF can maximise its impact in the landscape in a manner that encourages collaboration, increases accountability and transparency, and provides much-needed resources to specific areas in conservation, both thematically and physically. The areas that have been identified by ZEF as areas we can intervene in are: Antipoaching, Human Wildlife Coexistence, Ranger Support, Wildlife Awareness and Education (both adult and child-level), and Conservation research. ZEF identifies partners in the landscape that are engaged in dealing with these thematic areas and works with them in mobilizing resources to support the work being done.



In the past year, ZEF has worked in supporting, in various ways, the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, The Zambezi Society, My Trees Trust, Kariba Animal Welfare Trust, Flying for Wildlife, Zambezi Valley Conservation Network, The Tashinga Initiative, and the Bumi Hills Anti-Poaching Unit. We have seen fantastic results from our partners this year including the installation of Starlink communications systems at five base stations throughout the lower Zambezi Valley, supply of 2 metric tonnes of mealie meal per month to augment Ranger rations, equipping and salary payments for Anti-poaching units, fencing of a municipal dumpsite to prevent elephants from ingesting plastic, adult education in beekeeping for rural farmers as well as equipping them with hives and a guaranteed link-to-market, and Wildlife education for multiple schools using virtual reality technology, to name but a few of the highlights from our Impact partners. We are immensely proud of the work that they all do in the landscape and are honoured to be a small but critical part in making that work happen. Zambezi Elephant Fund believes in, and operates on, the African proverb: "If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together". Collaborative work in the conservation landscape reflects how the landscape itself functions, with many parts playing their roles as designed, being a part of a greater, successful whole. ZEF is committed to playing its part and to helping others to do the same. We are so grateful to all our partners and all our supporters for the role they play in making things happen. For more information on how to be involved, please visit [www.zambezielephantfund.org](http://www.zambezielephantfund.org).

Many thanks

Rob Davy  
HEAD OF OPERATIONS  
Zambezi Elephant Fund



**Zambezi  
ELEPHANT  
FUND**



**“If you want to go fast,  
go alone, but if you want  
to go far, go together”  
- African proverb**



UP AND COMING  
TEENAGE ARTIST:

# Dexter Smith

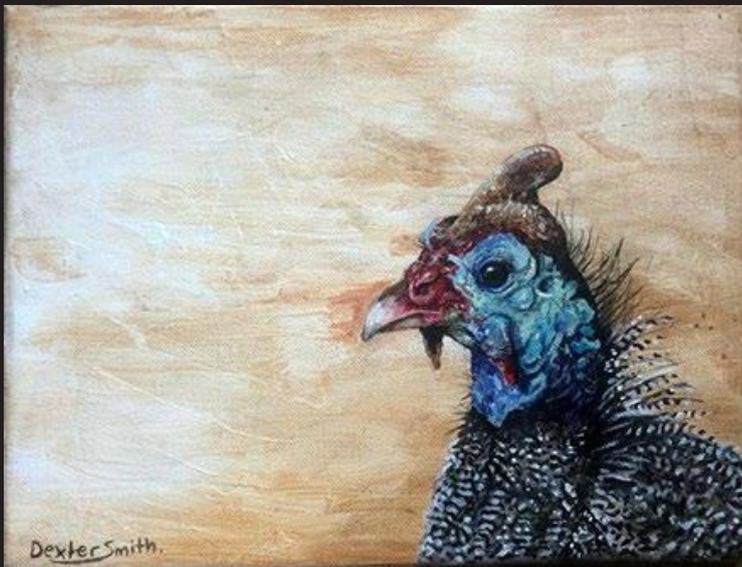
**D**exter Smith is a talented 15-year-old artist from Zimbabwe, whose passion for art is matched only by his love for the African wilderness. Born and raised in the heart of Africa, Dexter draws inspiration from the vibrant landscapes, majestic wildlife, and colorful birdlife that surround him.

With a creative journey spanning over 12 years, Dexter has developed a unique style that showcases his artistic flair. As a seasoned young artist, he has participated in numerous exhibitions, often being the only child among adult artists. His talent has earned him numerous awards and accolades in art competitions, and his paintings are highly sought after by art enthusiasts.

Dexter's artwork is a testament to his skill and attention to detail, with birds being a particular favorite subject. His paintings are not only visually stunning but also capture the essence of the African spirit. With a growing reputation in the art world, Dexter regularly sells his work and receives commissions from patrons who appreciate his unique perspective.

As he continues to hone his craft, Dexter's future in the art world looks bright, and his passion for capturing the beauty of Africa through his art is sure to inspire many.





# ZIMBABWE:

## Five Must Visit Destinations

- Grand Air can take you there!

Rich in wildlife, culture, and dramatic landscapes, Zimbabwe offers travellers an unforgettable mix of experiences. Here are some of the top destinations worth adding to your journey.



**1 VICTORIA FALLS** - The Smoke That Thunders  
Victoria Falls is Zimbabwe's most iconic attraction, famous for its dramatic curtain of water and misty rainforest views. Known as Mosi-oa-Tunya, it offers incredible viewpoints and a range of adventures, from helicopter flights to white-water rafting. It's a perfect blend of natural beauty and high-energy excitement.

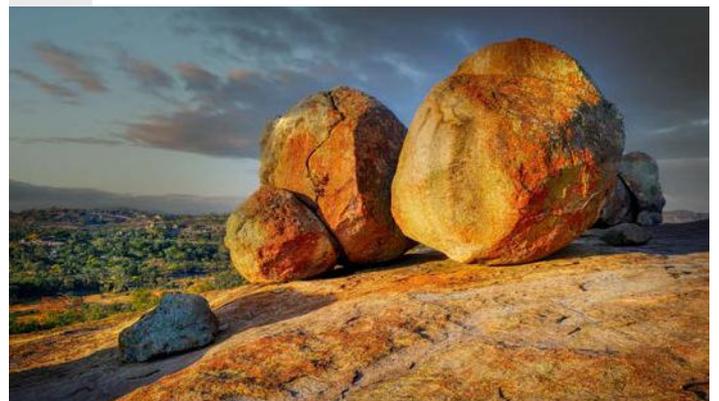
**2 HWANGE NATIONAL PARK**  
- Zimbabwe's Wildlife Giant  
Hwange is the country's largest national park and home to huge elephant herds, wild dogs, lions, and over 100 other mammal species. Its pumped waterholes create excellent year-round game viewing. With diverse lodges and classic safaris, Hwange is a must for wildlife lovers.

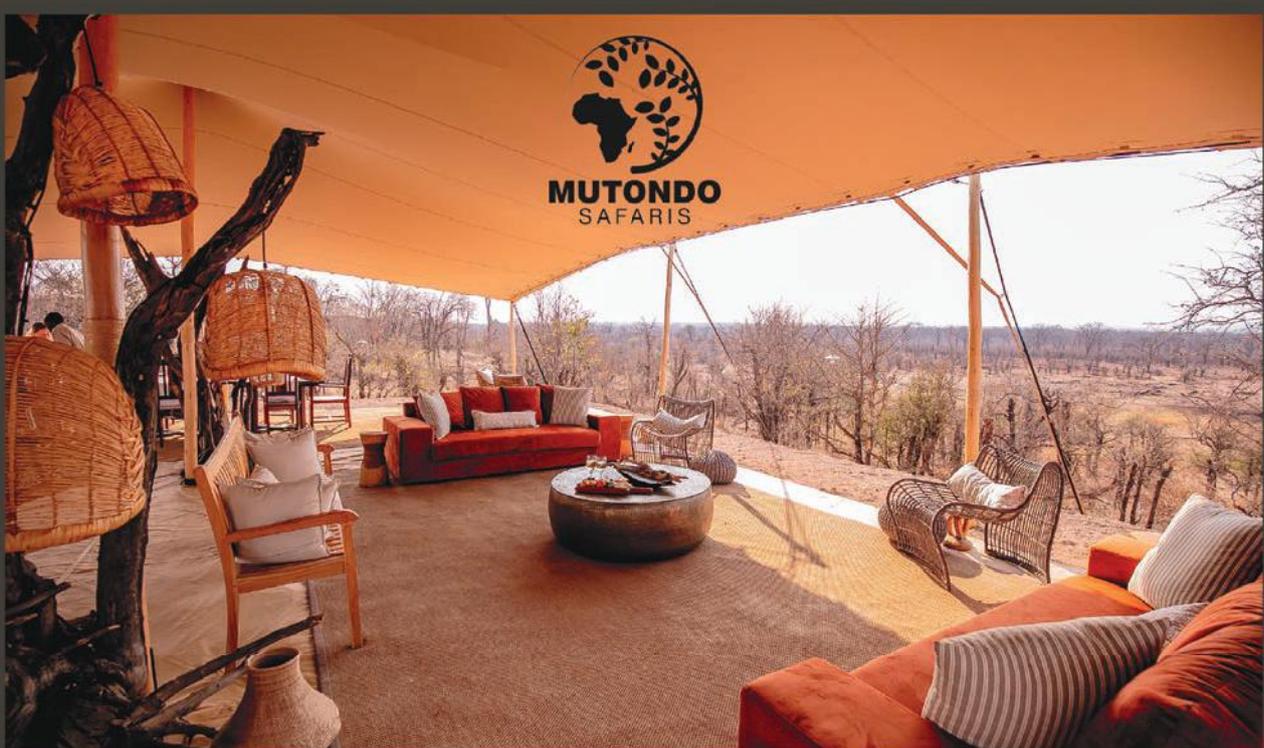
**3 MANA POOLS** - A Wilderness World Heritage Site  
Mana Pools is famed for its wild, untouched landscapes and close-up walking safaris along the Zambezi River. The park offers unique wildlife encounters and peaceful canoe trips through hippo- and bird-rich channels. It's ideal for travellers seeking raw, immersive adventure.



**4 GREAT ZIMBABWE** - Ancient Ruins with a Rich Legacy  
Great Zimbabwe is one of Africa's most remarkable archaeological sites, showcasing impressive stone structures built centuries ago. Visitors can explore the Great Enclosure, wander through narrow passages, and take in views from the Hill Complex. It's a destination filled with history, culture, and mystery.

**5 MATOBO HILLS** - A Landscape of Legends  
Matobo Hills features dramatic granite formations, ancient rock art, and sacred cultural sites. The area offers excellent rhino tracking and stunning viewpoints like World's View. Its mix of nature, heritage, and spirituality makes it one of Zimbabwe's most atmospheric places.





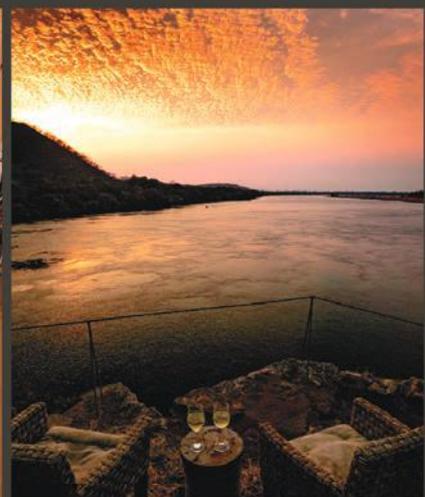
Mutondo Safaris - a new, vibrant company in the Southern African Safari market, with a vision to create true life changing safari explorations in the pristine remote spaces of the region.

Led by a highly experienced team of professionals, the journey has begun in Zimbabwe with two lodges - Camp Chitubu in Hwange National Park and Nyamoumba River Lodges in the Lower Zambezi - with concrete plans in place to establish outposts in other KAZA areas.

Based from the comfort of our hospitable camps, our fully licensed Zimbabwean professional guides will share with you their passion for walking safaris and the experiences that open our wild world to guests in an incomparable way.

Core to the business are efforts into conservation and protecting shared heritage, to maintain the natural beauty of these little visited areas.

*It's time to return to safari's true roots with Mutondo Safaris*



Camp Chitubu | Nyamoumba River Lodge

[www.mutondosafaris.com](http://www.mutondosafaris.com)

[reservations@campchitubu.com](mailto:reservations@campchitubu.com)

[reservations@nyamoumba.com](mailto:reservations@nyamoumba.com)





## THE IMIRE RHINOS: **Vulnerable, Poached and Endangered**

**G**rand Air met with inspirational Reilly Travers, custodian of 26 rhinos at Imire, 74 km outside Harare.

Riley is the third generation of the Travers family, following his grandfather's dream on the 4,200 kilometre patch of paradise known as Imire (Shona for "meeting place"). His grandfather settled in 1952 with a vision to grow the community, conservation, and more.

Imire currently cares for 26 rhinos. They are self-funded, and "passionate" seems a small word for what they are doing for Zimbabwe's most vulnerable wildlife.

They were entrusted with their first rhino in 1987, followed closely by seven orphans taken from the Matusadona area. Fast forward to 1991, when Imire cared for many more rhinos; the time came to release 26 rhinos back into the

Matusadona area. Sadly, all 26 were poached.

Not defeated, Reilly continued his work. Today, he heads a team of 32 on-the-ground staff, including security personnel, a K9 OTG team, and drone pilots. Between them, they check on every rhino twice daily. His vision is to leave Zimbabwe to his children and grandchildren "better than I found it." He embraces the National Parks ethos: "the wildlife belongs to the people of Zimbabwe."

Amid this amazing work, there is the constant pressure of securing resources to fund the ongoing costs of rhino conservation. With this in mind, we have requested a wish list from Reilly, and we invite you to consider: WHAT CAN I DO?

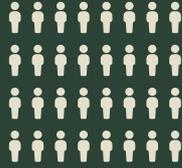
Through Grand Air, we would like to launch a "Mentor a Scout" incentive with your support.



**\$650**  
Covers fully-equipped uniform for 1 ranger

Weapon not included. Annually this is \$20,800.

**\$9825**  
Per month pays wages for 32 rangers



**\$5000**  
Monthly cost for general maintenance and repairs.

Fixing boundary fences and infrastructure, vehicle mechanics.



**\$8500**  
Annual cost to replace rhino tracking collars.

This is essential for the monitoring and security of black and white rhino.

**\$1500**  
Per month fuels all anti-poaching vehicles and motorbikes



**\$2300**  
Per month provides nutritional supplement for wildlife

**\$200,000**  
To replace 40km of fenceline, with sustainable steel fencing

A secure fenceline is Imire's first line of defence against poachers.



**\$1150**  
Monthly cost to run an effective aerial surveillance and reaction programme

Please consider "adopting" one of the 32 scouts who tirelessly work at Imire. You will be connected directly with your scout, receive regular updates from the grassroots level, and get photos and stories from Imire. In return, you would be asked to be a listening ear, offer encouragement, and boost the confidence and morale of these brave men who risk their lives daily to protect these remarkable creatures.

To learn more, contact Candice at the Imire office:

donations@imire.co.zw  
+263 772 248512

USD Account: 19904234030

ZWL Account: 19904234049

Branch Code: 2199

Branch name: Cripps Road

Swift Code: BARCZWHX

Business Address:

2 Premium Close, Mount Pleasant, Harare

*Together, we can protect these critically endangered rhinos and help Reilly realize his dream of leaving Zimbabwe better than he found it.*





SCAN & LISTEN  
TO GEMMA



# A Coffee date with Gemma

She sits cross-legged on the couch, totally at ease, a down-to-earth warmth radiating from her. Gemma's enthusiasm for Zimbabwe, her city, and life in general is contagious. Today we pull back the curtain on the artist known simply as Gemma, a storyteller who wears her ten-year journey in the industry like a badge of honour - a tapestry of hustle, late nights, heartbreak, perseverance, and finally, gratitude.

Her latest album, GEMMA, is out now. This album follows a girl from Harare who spends ten years chasing a dream. She nods to the little places around Harare that have sustained her, and weaves in themes of love, resilience, and faith. The spiritual elements aren't about preaching; they're about gratitude, redemption, and the belief that every setback is part of a larger composition that ends in gratitude for the journey. She is exactly where she is meant to be. The fact that she has a voice that penetrates your soul helps you feel her story. Don't take our word for it. Feel free to download her album, link in QR code.

## A standout moment on the road to GEMMA:

Gemma - We were recording in Victoria Falls and decided to take a break. We wandered into a local brewery for a bite, and there was an open mic night. An 18-year-old guy took the stage, and his voice just blew us away. When his mom came to pick him up, I asked if I could "borrow" him - not to steal, but to invite him to record with us. He ended up laying down the intro for one of my songs. It was one of those "right place, right time" moments where music truly happens. He had never recorded before, and that moment became a memory on my album — a reminder that great opportunities can arrive when you're open to them and when you're listening.

There is a visual album too. It adds another layer to the music - it's a storytelling companion that lets you see the journey as it unfolds. While the audio carries the emotion, the visuals carry the narrative, turning songs into scenes and chapters filmed in some of the most beautiful locations in Zimbabwe.

Gemma: I love working with Zimbabwean creatives - designers, visual artists, musicians, and technicians. The aim is authenticity: to reflect our culture, our city, and our people with honesty. Every element you see in the visual album - the costumes, the set design, the colour palette - is shaped by local talent. When you support local artists, you're supporting a network of dreamers who keep the culture vibrant. It's important to me that GEMMA tells a true Zimbabwean story, using the tools and vessels we've built here at home.

## Q & A WITH GEMMA

**Q – WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM YOU IN 2026**

A – Definitely a new single ultimately leading to a new album

**Q – WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE SONG OFF YOUR NEW ALBUM**

A – Holy

**Q – BEST CROWD YOU HAVE EVER PERFORMED TO**

A – HICC 2020 with Winky D

**Q – FAVORITE UPCOMING ZIMBABWEAN MUSICAL ARTIST**

A – Kyla Blac

**Q – FAVOURITE HANG OUT**

A – Mara mara Thursday night Jazz scene

**Q – FAVOURITE CHARITY**

A – My Trees ([www.mytreestrust.org](http://www.mytreestrust.org))

**Q – FAVORITE TIME OUT**

A – 5 days in the bush by a pool

**Q - GEMMAS MANTRA**

A - Bholato Bholato (Cool)

**Q - DESIGNERS OF CHOICE**

A - Sabelo Official and Haus of Stone

**Q - WHATS THE LAST THING YOU BOUGHT**

A - Hand made earrings from the local market

**Q – FAVOURITE RESTAURANT**

A - Kwanandi

## GEMMA RECOMMENDS YOU TRY:

### FOOD:

Rezviyo with tsunga ne dovi

### PLACES:

Great Zimbabwe

Spa day at Miombo

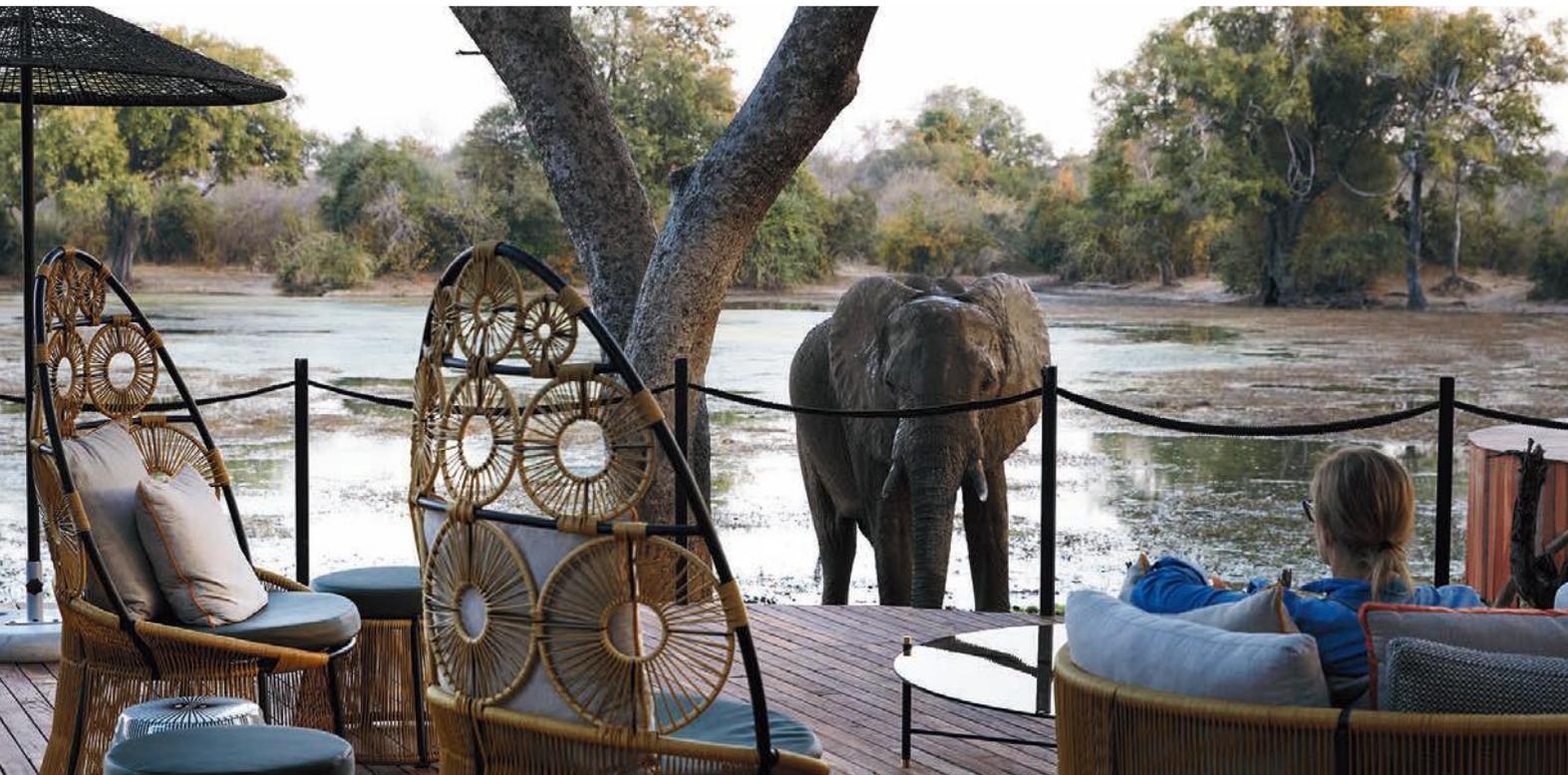
Day trip to Doboshava

### INFLUENCER TO FOLLOW – TRAVEL RELATED:

Kurlyaffair

### NEXT ON GEMMA'S AGENDA:

A Chimanmani Hike



## Stay 4, Fly Free Offer - Exclusive Travel Special

Experience a bucket-list luxury safari in Mana Pools, in the heart of a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Zimbabwe.

Book a minimum of 4 nights at Molori Mashuma in a Premier or Villa-style Tent and we'll cover the costs of the chartered connecting return flights between Harare and Mana Pools.

The offer is valid for a minimum of six people travelling together in one aircraft.

*Validity:* Offer valid from 1 April to 31 October 2026

*Includes:* Accommodation for four nights, all meals, select wines & spirits, tea and coffee, in-suite bar with snacks and beverages, game drives and bush walks.

*Excludes:* Park and conservation fees

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Explore our comprehensive selection of reliable, stylish, and built-to-last vehicles under one roof. We offer a wide variety of Toyota models including the latest arrivals and ex-stock. Get your Toyota model today and experience the renowned excellence in terms of **quality, durability, and performance** that Toyota is celebrated for.

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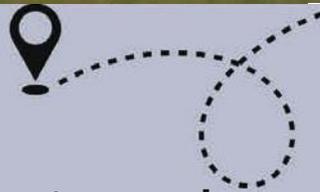
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**FARAMATSI  
TOYOTA**



**GRAND AIR**  
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HOME...Grand Air has taken you there.... in style.