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## Zimbabwe Rhino and Elephant Conservation

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



**Trip Name:** Zimbabwe Rhino and Elephant Conservation    **Trip Code:** ZIBR    **Duration:** From 2 weeks

### Trip Highlights

- Get up close to majestic Elephants
- Experience some of Zimbabwe's most beautiful scenery
- Spend some quality time with the resident Black Rhinos
- Elephant back safaris
- Play your part in the conservation of some of Zimbabwe's most endangered wildlife
- Live in close contact with the wildlife on the game reserve
- Get a behind the scenes look at life on an African game reserve.
- Live in the heart of the Zimbabwe bush



### Overview

Live in close contact with Zimbabwe wildlife including black and white rhino, African elephants and buffalo on the 10,000-acre private game reserve. You'll have the opportunity to spend time with rhino and elephants and be involved in valuable conservation work which will help towards securing the futures of these endangered species in Zimbabwe. You will get a behind the scenes insight into the running of a privately owned African game reserve.

You may also have an opportunity to meet some of the local children and community leaders as you spend time at one of the nearby schools; teach them a little about conservation or even help them out with their veggie patch! This programme and country is bound to capture your heart and leave you with memories that will last a lifetime.

### Destination Info

Zimbabwe borders Zambia, South Africa, Botswana and Mozambique. It is a diverse and exhilarating destination with some of the most beautiful and well-protected game reserves in the world. These privately run reserves are on a mission to protect the bio-diversity and wildlife that Zimbabwe is home to.

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There are over 10 large National Parks and numerous private reserves across Zimbabwe. Your time in Zimbabwe will be vital to the protection and conservation of many endangered animals and their surrounding environment, which is conducive to their survival.

This project is based on a private farm, approximately 105 km from Harare, set in rolling bushveld landscapes offering a unique experience and that is not to be missed!

## Itinerary



Your time at this project will be divided into spending time with the wildlife learning about and spending time with the animals, in particular the black rhino and elephants and getting involved with the game park, and spending time at the local school close to the project. The emphasis is very much on wildlife conservation and the majority of your time is spent in the game park but part of the programme includes educating the community on its importance.

No two days are the same and some of the activities you will be involved with include:

### Spending time with the Black Rhino on the reserve

Monitoring their behaviour, social activity, interactions and breeding behaviour. Your duties here may include:

- Maintenance and cleaning of the rhino beds
- Walking with the rhino and collecting data on their behaviour

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## Working with the elephants

Undertaking anti-poaching and snare patrols, teaching co-operative elephant handling, observing their family interactions, monitoring and assessing browsing behaviour. It is an amazing experience to spend time with these magnificent animals and their experienced handlers and you will get many opportunities to interact with these beautiful creatures. Your duties here may include;

- Maintenance and cleaning of the elephant beds
- Work around the game park involving the elephants as required, e.g. deliveries, wood collection
- Observing the elephants in their natural habitat and spending valuable time in their company whilst gathering data



*You may also be involved in the following activities:*

- Assisting in the general running of the game park- including; animal feeding, anti-poaching patrols, bush clearance, removal of foreign plant species, game counts and maintaining vegetable gardens
- Undertaking community projects with local schools and pre-school in permaculture, gardening, conservation education, sports and general teaching assistance
- Helping with special projects around the game park and having unexpected adventures!
- In your spare time you can go fishing, canoeing, camping in the bush, undertake rifle training or just relax by the pool at the volunteer house with a cold beer! You will have the opportunity to go horse riding in the bush - an amazing way to experience the wildlife, elephant riding and even enjoy a swim with the elephants! For those who enjoy hiking the in-country team can arrange walks both on and off the reserve, visit local cultural sites or go and enjoy the hustle and bustle of Harare.

## Accommodation

The accommodation on this project is fantastic! You will be staying in a double storied farmhouse, which is situated at the centre of the ranch and on the edge of a dam. Sometimes Elephants, Rhinos and Hippos will come to browse in the garden, which is a stunning sight.

You will be staying in a shared bedroom (either double or four people sharing) with shared bathrooms. Hot water and electricity is available but power cuts are quite normal, so remember to bring a torch! The house has a large dining room, two communal sitting rooms with fireplaces in each and a kitchen. In the evenings volunteers can meet in the sitting room to relax and talk about the day's events.

## Programme Services and Facilities

### Internet

There is Internet access at the project, however, this only works when there is electricity and this is not always constant! You will have to pay for this and the project staff will let you know how much this will cost when you arrive.

### Telephone

The international dialling code for Zimbabwe is +263.

To place an outgoing call, direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, +49 for Germany, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164 / +49 69 222226 475.

There is a mobile phone signal at various spots on the farm. However, please be aware that it can be a bit temperamental and it will be easier to text than call. Therefore, it is a good idea to take out a mobile phone and purchase a local pay as you go SIM card, so that its possible to call or text home cheaply. If you would like to do this, please talk to the project manager upon arrival at Harare airport. If you are planning to do this please ensure your mobile phone is set up with international roaming and unlocked before you depart, so that you may use a local pay-as-you-go SIM while you are away.

### Laundry

Your laundry will be done for you twice a week. This is included in your project price.

### Electricity

As previously mentioned the electricity supply to the camp is not always consistent, as a result it is a good idea to bring plenty of batteries for cameras and other electrical appliances, although you will get a chance to charge these when the electricity supply is working. It is also a good idea to bring head torches for power cuts in the evening.

## Meals

Three meals and basic house keeping duties will be provided for you each day. You will be required to help with keeping the house clean and tidy, maintaining the garden and the vegetable garden.

## What's Included

- Help of trained guides
- All accommodation
- Meals throughout your project
- 24 hour project support
- Arrival orientation



## What's Not Included

- Flights
- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers (US\$100 per person each way, US\$200 total)
- Visa costs and departure tax



## Is This Trip For You?

You must be in a good physical condition, as you will be expected to walk long distances and participate in physical activities.

You may be the only volunteer at your chosen project at any one time. However, you will still have the full support of your in-country team and those at the project. If you are looking for a group volunteering experience we have plenty of options for you to consider.

## Additional Information

### Project Orientation

On arrival you will have a briefing as to the rules of safety of the safari ranch. Your orientation will also include:

- Introduction to all camp staff including managers, guides, researchers, and assistants
- Familiarisation with the Safari camp and the conservancy, including the boundaries, internal roads and tracks and some of the wildlife species of the area in which you will be working

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- Introduction to current research procedures
- Further information about the rhino protection programme
- Familiarisation with all other duties you will be involved in
- You will be working with the indigenous population of Zimbabwe, so you will also be given a short briefing on local culture and etiquette etc.

## What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and therefore, you may not need all of the listed items on your travels nor is it exhaustive.

Also, please be aware that the weather can change considerably from winter to summer and you should pack according to when you are travelling to ensure that you have the appropriate clothing.

## Personal Admin

- Passport, insurance certificates and personal documentation
- Photocopies of all the above to be left at home with your next of kin
- Spending money preferably in US\$ and some small change for tipping the staff
- US Dollars for tourist visa
- Proof of inoculations (please speak to your GP about necessary immunisations)
- Secure, waterproof bag for documents and money: sealable plastic bags will do

## General

- Camera/film or memory card/Batteries or charger (you will be able to re-charge items)
- Batteries for any electrical items you bring with you
- Safety matches (comes in handy for general use)
- Pocket-knife (optional - comes in handy for general use)
- Water bottle – at least one litre
- Warm sleeping bag for winter months
- Pillow if preferred
- Binoculars for game viewing
- Inexpensive wrist watch
- Personal hygiene kit, toiletries and towel
- Silk or cotton liner: Ideal for hot nights or as an extra layer to your sleeping bag
- Sunglasses (high UV protection)
- Sun cream (high factor needed)
- Sun hat/bandana
- Small torch (head torch is preferable) plus spare batteries and bulbs, especially useful for power cuts
- Diary and writing pens
- Day pack/rucksack for everyday use – not brightly coloured
- Mobile phone – set for roaming
- Personal stereo
- Sewing kit and pocket knife for general use
- Pegs and travel wash for clothes
- Travel guide, such as Lonely Planet or Rough Guide
- Travel wash for personal laundry items, including underwear
- The evenings can be quiet so bring books, cards, board games etc to play

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- Donations for the children (Vegetable seeds, crayons, sweets, colouring books, second hand clothes, footballs etc.)

## Clothing

- A pair of thick socks for walking
- Sandals
- Work gloves/gardening gloves to protect your hands – optional for conservation work
- Very warm fleece/pullover as it can get very cold at night
- Khaki or neutral coloured clothing if you chose to visit a game reserve (N.B. no camouflage design)
- Sunhat
- Long trousers
- Warm clothing for winter – maybe hat and gloves etc, can get very cold June-August
- Swimwear
- Sets of outdoor loose fitting cotton clothes with full arm and leg cover for cooler mornings and evenings
- Three pairs of shorts for Project work
- T-shirts/vest tops (not white) for project work
- Boots or sturdy trainers for project work
- Casual clothes for the weekends
- Swimwear
- Underwear – enough for at least seven days, possibly more
- Pyjamas/nightwear
- Waterproof jacket
- Warm clothes for winter and early mornings.

## Medical Kit

- Personal toiletries
- Hand sanitizer and wet wipes
- Anti-malarial tablets
- Personal First Aid Kit
- Personal medication e.g. anti malarial tablets/prescription drugs/inhalers
- Painkillers
- Contact lenses and solution if necessary
- Plasters
- Lip balm with SPF
- Tweezers (not in hand luggage!)
- Scissors (not in hand luggage!)
- Sanitary products for women if necessary
- Mosquito net + repellent (ensure it contains DEET or equivalent) for the summer months
- Ear plugs

## Minimum Age

Minimum 18 years, maximum decided on potential participants' health.

## Minimum Numbers

There are no minimum numbers on the trip.

Please note: you may be the only volunteer at your chosen project at any one time. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact us

## Flights

Your flight to Zimbabwe should arrive at Harare Airport on your programme start date before 5.10pm, and your return flight should be arranged for your programme end date.

If you are unable to arrange your flights to arrive **before 5.10pm** on your programme start date, please contact us before arranging your flights.

To book your flights, please contact your travel advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your online account or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

**Please note:** It is important that you do arrive on this set date and time into Harare. Upon arrival, you will need to pay an additional airport transfer fee to your project of US\$50 per person, one way.

## FAQs

- 1. What is the accomodation like?**  
The accomodation is of a good standard, twin share, flush toilets.
- 2. How much spending money would you recommend I take?**  
We generally recommend that you take around £70-£80 per week plus US\$200 (US\$100 per person for more than one person) for your airport transfers which are not included in your programme fee.
- 3. I am a first time traveler, and a bit apprehensive about travelling on my own. Do many people do this by themselves?**  
The majority of our participants are solo travelers, so you will be one of many in the same position. We e-mail out a buddy list 2-3 weeks before you start, so you can begin to get to know one another beforehand.
- 4. Upon arrival, how long does it take to get to the project?**  
You will be met and transferred from Harare airport which will take around 2 hours.
- 5. Do I need to take a sleeping bag?**  
No, all bedding is provided.
- 6. Do I need to take a mosquito net?**  
No, mosquito nets are provided
- 7. Will there be a safe/safety deposit box available?**  
Yes, there will be a safe available for you to use.

## Police Check

This trip requires a Police Check to be carried out - please contact us for further information on how to do this.



## Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

## Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

## Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

## Money Matters

In Zimbabwe the official currency is the Zimbabwean dollar (Z\$), however, this has not been widely used for several years due to hyperinflation. The recommended currencies are the South African Rand, the US Dollar and the British Pound, all are widely accepted and US Dollars can be withdrawn from ATMs in most major cities.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant \$10.00  
Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) \$0.80  
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) \$1.00  
Water (0.33 litre bottle) \$0.50

(Prices quoted in US Dollar)

## Passports and Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information offered below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of

entry or otherwise and any subsequent effects.

For stays of up to 90 days, citizens of the European Union, the USA, Australia and New Zealand must obtain a holiday visa; these can be issued upon arrival and purchased with USD. Citizens of Ghana and South Africa can obtain visas without charge.

Citizens of the following countries will not need a visa for stays of up to 90 days: Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Congo, Cyprus, Fiji, Grenada, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Namibia, Nauru, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & Grenadines, Swaziland, Tanzania, Trinidad & Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu & Zambia.

## Cultural Considerations

### Clothing

Please dress appropriately at the programme. Some occasions may require a more conservative dress code, including upper legs and arms covered. You can ask the project leader if in doubt.

### Religion

The majority of the population is Christian, influenced from early settling missionaries. Alongside Christian beliefs, a large proportion of Zimbabweans still follow traditional African religions. A small percentage of people follow Muslim and other beliefs.

### Social Hierarchy

This is what you would expect of any country; the older people are treated with great respect. Men are considered to be of higher standing than women and children are expected to do as they are told!

### Smoking and Alcohol

Smoking and drinking is tolerated in Zimbabwe and you will find that you will be able to get imported beer cheaply in most establishments. However, please respect other volunteers. Smoking is not permitted inside the house. Drinking is only permissible in moderation and must not impact on your volunteer work during the week. While we want you to have fun in your free time, antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated at the project.

### Drugs

It is absolutely forbidden to bring drugs into Zimbabwe. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs. If you get caught there is little chance that you will walk away without punishment. As in most countries, Zimbabwe has very strict rules when it comes to the possession of drugs. All drugs, including 'soft' drugs like marijuana, are illegal. Please do NOT use any illegal substances whilst travelling – it is not worth the risk and is not acceptable at the project.

### Greetings

Pleasantries are taken seriously and using 'hello' and 'goodbye' can go a long way to making friends and being

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accepted. Please take the time to learn a few local words and show that you are keen to fit in. There is also a big emphasis on shaking hands. The Western way of doing this will be fine, but you are likely to pick up a few local variations!

On the whole, Zimbabweans are easy-going people - any social errors are unlikely to cause offence and so please do not worry!

## Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

## Safety

Unfortunately, tourists are always targets for pickpockets and thieves. Please educate yourself about Africa and Zimbabwe in particular, before you leave, so that you can be alert for all types of situations. General travel safety rules are below.

- Avoid travelling alone, especially at night
- Find out where the unsafe areas are and avoid them
- When travelling keep all-important documents and valuables in a safe place, like an inner hidden pocket or money belt.
- Carry only as much cash as you think you will need for the day.
- Don't wear expensive jewellery or watches
- Be wary of people who seem too friendly too fast
- Keep cameras out of sight. Always keep bags and purses in your sight.
- Before swimming, ask how safe the area is

### ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

## Language Guide

English is the official language of Zimbabwe, however, it is only spoken by about 2% of the country. The majority of

Zimbabweans, about 76%, speak Shona.

Below are some useful Shona phrases to remember when you get to Zimbabwe. We also suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

## English - Shona

Hello - *Kanjan/Kanjani*

How are you? - *Mhoro*

I'm fine - *Ndiri rayiti*

Thank you (very much) - *Tatenda*

Goodbye - *Fambai zvakwanaka*

## Food & Drink

Traditional food is fun to try and easy to enjoy. Sadza is the most widely served traditional dish, made from ground maize and eaten with meat or sauce. Another dish to sample is Nhedzi, which is a wild mushroom soup. Game meat including ostrich, warthog and crocodile tail are also enjoyed.

Buying food at the roadside/market stalls is a good way to experience some more traditional food, and can be very tasty. You can often find pieces of grilled meat, deep-fried potato or cassava chips, roasted corn cobs and many local sweets. Please ensure that the food is freshly prepared.

The traditional staple diet in Africa is meat and carbohydrates. If you are a vegetarian you will be catered for with lots of fresh root vegetables such as yams and potatoes and fruits. However, please be aware that your meals towards the end of your programme may become a little repetitive so perhaps it may be worth buying a few of your favourite snacks whilst you are in Africa.

There is a lot of fresh fruit in Africa, which is extremely cheap to buy for a quick snack or nutritional lunch so it may be worth picking some up from the market quite cheaply for your daily vitamin fix. However, please be aware that fresh items for salads etc are hard to come by in Africa, although the project leaders will try to get this as often as possible for you.

Drinking water from the tap is not generally considered to be safe, so choices include plastic bottled water, boiled or filtered tap water, and "pure water" sachets. These sachets are filtered and come in 500 ml plastic bag portions. Many foreigners prefer bottled water, though water in sealed plastic sachets is safe, easily accessible, and extremely cheap. Soft drinks and Whawha, the local maize beer, are widely available.

## Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. However, although businesses and government offices are closed on public holidays, tourist attractions and shops are almost never closed. The main impact on the tourist of these holidays is the increased competition for travel

and accommodation from Zimbabwean's who use long weekends to get away from the big towns.

To view a list of the public holidays for Zimbabwe, please see the link below:

<http://www.worldtravelguide.net/zimbabwe/public-holidays>

## Weather

Located in the southern hemisphere, Zimbabwe's seasons are opposite to those in the Northern hemisphere. Temperatures in the higher regions are warm but rarely uncomfortably hot around the year with May to September the best time to travel. The autumn and winter months are mainly dry and cool, with the rainy season or Green Season falling between November and April bringing a hotter climate and the heaviest rains in the eastern mountain areas.

## Time

Zimbabwe is two hours ahead of GMT.

In Africa, time is not a priority like it is in much of the western world – there is a saying that Africa works to 'Africa Time', which basically means you must exercise a lot of patience! If a boat is due to leave at 12pm, don't be surprised if it still hasn't a couple of hours later... keep an open mind, and arrive 'expecting the unexpected'.

## Electricity

Electricity in Zimbabwe is 220 Volts and frequency 50 Hertz. If you travel to Zimbabwe with a device that does not accept 220 Volts at 50 Hertz, you will need a voltage converter.

Outlets in Zimbabwe generally accept 2 types of plug:



Three round pins arranged in a triangle



Two parallel flat pins with ground pin

## Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.



# Zimbabwe Rhino and Elephant Conservation

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

## Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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