



The Taj Pamodzi Hotel, in Lusaka, has an extensive gym with good masseurs, as well as a large swimming pool



Fish eagle soaring

LUSAKA

Some visitors pass rapidly through central Zambia, bypassing Lusaka's chaotic traffic and sprawling suburbs; others overnight here. It is not a bad city, and many are surprised when they enjoy its tree-lined boulevards and vibrant street life.

If you've only got one night in Lusaka, then you may want a central and efficient base. The **Taj Pamodzi Hotel** is probably your best option; like most of Lusaka's hotels, it's about 45 minutes' drive from the airport. This large (200 rooms), international hotel has all the facilities that you'd expect, including three restaurants, one serving excellent curries. Guests have access to a notably good adjacent fitness centre, which has a spa (offering great, inexpensive massages), a gym and a good swimming pool.

For a complete contrast, **Pioneer Camp** is a less formal, more rustic, bushy option – standing on 25 acres of its own miombo woodland. Pioneer Camp is about 20 minutes' drive from the airport and caters for a range of travellers, including campers, who mix in the bustling bar and restaurant (where the huge T-bone steaks are superb!).



Many of Lusaka's roads are lined by jacaranda trees, which flower in September

Only some of the rooms here have an en-suite bathroom, and these are the ones that we recommend.

AROUND LUSAKA

For somewhere out of town, stay at **Chaminuka**, a bush lodge about 30 minutes' drive from the airport. This was the private home of one of Lusaka's most affluent citizens; now it's a spacious and stylish lodge. Its walls are adorned with an excellent collection of contemporary Zambian art (and a few hunting trophies). Chaminuka's stunning main lounge is atop a hill, with sliding glass doors giving a 360° view. Each of its 19 suites has a telephone, air-con and doors opening onto the lawns.

Inside the lodge you'll find several other lounges, including a sunken TV lounge, a dining room, a sauna, a small library and a snooker room. Outside there are two swimming pools, with an adjacent terrace, a tennis court, a sauna and a jacuzzi. Surrounding it all is a private nature reserve stretching 100km², where 4WD game drives, walks, fishing sorties and riding are available.



Wildlife is everywhere in Zambia

Zambia: the facts

- Currency:** The Zambian currency is the Zambian kwacha and at time of writing £1 = Kw6,800. Camps usually charge in UK£ or US\$; credit cards are accepted by most, although most have a surcharge.
- Visas:** At the time of writing, most nationalities can buy a visa for Zambia on arrival, using UK pounds or US dollars cash. Ask or, or check with your nearest embassy, for the latest details.
- Health:** Zambia is a tropical country and several vaccines are sensible (typhoid, polio, hepatitis, tetanus and possibly meningitis C). Malaria is common: you must take anti-malarials. Always check the latest recommendations with your doctor or travel clinic.
- Language:** English is the official language and is spoken by most people.
- Food:** The standard of food at safari camps is very high. The local 'Mosi' beer is good, as are imported South African beers and wines.
- Climate:** For details of Zambia's climate, and the best times to visit, see the section on 'When to go' on pages 14-15.
- Children:** Many camps are unsuitable for children, who will always need full-time supervision when on safari. However, one or two now offer excellent family holidays specifically tailored for children, so please ask us for details.
- Luggage:** Most transfers between parks use light aircraft which results in a luggage restriction of 12-15kg per person, packed in squashable bags. Travellers require only comfortable, casual clothes and camps have efficient laundry services. If you have a lot of excess luggage, then discuss this with us before you book.