

## LIVINGSTONE & THE VICTORIA FALLS

For many years we've recognised Livingstone as the perfect location from which to visit the great Victoria Falls. Once eclipsed by the busier Zimbabwean town of Victoria Falls (see page 151), Livingstone rose to the challenge and now offers a great range of accommodation and activities.

### BESIDE THE FALLS

Owned by *Sun International*, there are two hotels very close to the Falls. Both are normally arranged on a bed-and-breakfast basis.

The five-star **Royal Livingstone** has 173 well-appointed rooms, complete with satellite TV. They are relatively modest in size, but by contrast, the hotel's lounge and dining room are grand and airy – reminiscent of the colonial Victoria Falls Hotel. The food is stylishly presented, best eaten on the shady veranda, overlooking the lawn, the pool and the Zambezi River beyond.

For a great value option and a location just a few hundred metres walk from the Falls, choose the adjacent **Zambezi Sun**. The atmosphere is informal and the design colourful and fun. At the centre of the hotel is a curving swimming pool with a restaurant and café/bar adjacent. Its 212 compact rooms are comfortable, with an en-suite shower, toilet and washbasin. The Zambezi Sun is large, but its superb location and excellent value make it a good choice for many.



Victoria Falls at sunset

Opened in 2009, and situated 12km above the Falls, is the 77-room, four-star **David Livingstone Safari Lodge & Spa**. With river frontage and a private sunset cruise boat, this is another good hotel option.

### UPSTREAM OF THE FALLS

In contrast to the above, there are several excellent small lodges beside the Zambezi. These intimate, quiet lodges are often more costly than the hotels, but your stay usually includes your meals and many activities.

**Toka Leya Camp**, a sister lodge of The River Club (see below/right) is situated about 12km upstream of the Falls. 12 comfortable walk-in tents are raised on decks and linked by walkways. Each tent has glass sliding doors, air conditioning and en-suite facilities, including an outside shower overlooking the Zambezi. The camp has a main dining/bar area with good views, a plunge pool, a small curio shop and a fully equipped spa.

**Tongabezi** is a lovely lodge set on a sweeping bend in the Zambezi. It's long been one of the region's most romantic

hideaways and its experienced team maintains a smart, exclusive and distinctly Zambian feel. Along with a thatched riverside bar and spacious lounge area there's a rock swimming pool under a tumbling waterfall and a multi-level lookout designed for exclusive dining and relaxation.

Tongabezi has five thatched 'cottages', all tastefully furnished with large picture windows opening onto verandas beside the river, and elegant en-suite bathrooms. Set back from the river, the Garden House is ideal for a family or small group with two en-suite double bedrooms, a dining room, garden and plunge pool. There are also five spectacular individual houses – stylish suites that face the river; four have completely open sides, whilst the fifth is enclosed and has a private plunge pool. To escape further, consider a few nights at **Sindabezi**, Tongabezi's private island in the middle of the Zambezi. It's a wonderfully serene place to watch the river run by. Sindabezi's five beautiful en-suite chalets are set up on raised decks among the trees, and reached by soft sand paths. All have completely open fronts facing the river, a sundeck, a hot outdoor shower, canopied bed and loo with a view. The honeymoon chalet has a claw foot open-air bath.

**The River Club** has a colonial feel and 10 split-level chalets; all look out from a high riverbank with one side open. Beside the lounge and dining room is a small library with a variety of books and parlour games, whilst outside is a swimming pool overlooking the river, a croquet lawn, tennis court and a short nature trail around the lodge's grounds. There is also a spa with various treatments available on request.

Further upstream, **Islands of Siankaba** is built on two densely forested islands, linked by suspension bridges. The lodge's seven stylish tented rooms are dotted around the edges of one island, with views out over the river from large verandas. Each is beautifully furnished with a stand-alone bath and a separate shower, a minibar, a ceiling fan, and a large walk-in mosquito net around the bed. The bar, lounge, dining area, massage suite and small swimming pool are all a few steps away on the neighbouring island. Whilst you can visit the Falls from Siankaba, its activities focus on the islands and the river – including particularly good walks around the local communities, led by a village elder.

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Bungee-jumping over the Zambezi

### Activities at the Falls

We can arrange many activities in this area before you arrive, from bungee-jumping to white-water rafting, and scenic flights to romantic lunches on Livingstone Island. Call our team to discuss the available options. (Note that we recommend that our travellers do **not** do any activities involving 'Walking with baby lions' here.)