

VICTORIA FALLS

'Scenes so lovely must have been gazed upon by Angels in their flight' is the often-quoted note that David Livingstone made when he first saw this spectacular waterfall. Just across the river from the Zambian town of Livingstone (see page 133) lies the small Zimbabwean town of Victoria Falls.

This is a major crossroads for travellers, with hotels and restaurants and many shops. There's plenty to do besides marvelling at the waterfall. The sightseeing flight over the Falls, called 'The Flight of Angels', is enchanting, whilst those in search of further excitement can bungee-jump, canoe amongst hippos and crocodiles, or raft down one of the world's toughest stretches of white water.

There is still a handful of good hotels here. The delightfully small (just 34 rooms) **Ilala Lodge** is our top recommendation. Family owned and run by its founders' children, Ilala is the closest Zimbabwean hotel to the Falls, serves some of the best food in town and is great value.

A few kilometres out of town, **Victoria Falls Safari Lodge** is also reliably good and has

72 thatched rooms overlooking an often busy waterhole on the edge of the Zambezi National Park – where the game is remarkably relaxed.

The classic old colonial **Victoria Falls Hotel** continues to thrive and is now owned by the large Zimbabwe-based group, African Sun Hotels. (The ownership of this group is not completely clear to us; because of this, we do have reservations about recommending it.) With over 100 rooms it has imposing public areas and a commanding position overlooking the spray of the Falls and the railway bridge built by Rhodes.



"Mosi-oa-Tunya" – At full flood, the mighty Zambezi River cascades over 100m at Victoria Falls