

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

EXPERT



AFRICA

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EXPERT AFRICA

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

For 20 years, *Expert Africa* has been synonymous with high-quality holidays in Africa. Our knowledgeable team offer first-hand, independent advice, a fair ethos, and unrivalled attention to detail, and these have always been our trademarks. We're very proud of our achievements, delighted to have expanded our team of experts, and thrilled to have had so many repeat travellers over the last year.

If you're one of our regular travellers you'll notice this bijou booklet, **2015 Highlights**, is very different from our usual substantial publication. It's designed as a quick reference to some of the more interesting changes taking place and new camps and lodges that have emerged over the last twelve months.

Rest assured that while we only cover a selection of new places here, we're not shunning our old favourites. This **Highlights** collection is designed to be used in conjunction with our website and the current full 2014-15 brochure – so if you need a copy of that 322-page tome, please contact us and we'll send you one right away.

Sending out **Highlights** is one of a number of changes we're making to how we

operate, and there are more in the pipeline. We have thought hard about how we can help you plan your African adventures with greater ease, communicate with you more effectively, and further improve our personal service.

To these ends, we're making even more information accessible on the web over the coming year: we will roll out enhanced tools that allow you to view real-time lodge availability; we're implementing a comprehensive, new reservations system to speed up quotation times and upgrade our literature; and we're taking a fresh approach to currency exchange rates, aiming to make our quotes even more competitive.

Expert Africa's ethos remains unchanged: these improvements have been driven by our passion to become even better at what we do – and we're very excited about them. For more details on all these upgrades and what you can expect, see the next page.

Of course, we continue to travel extensively in Africa ourselves – staying in the camps and lodges, quizzing the guides, eating the food, watching the wildlife and personally checking the details that we know are important to you when you travel. We also continue to write the hundreds of straight-talking, detailed reports on lodges, camps and hotels that you can find on our website.

Look out next January for another comprehensive brochure for 2016-17, and meanwhile please talk to us about your next trip to Africa.

We aim to make our great service and trips even better!

“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change”

We've always known that, just like species, travel companies must adapt to survive. We've evolved how we work fairly constantly over the last 20 years; it's been one of the keys to our success. Our more regular travellers will know that we've come a long way by consistently upgrading our workings and our website, and by investing in our team. We always strive to give better service and to organise better trips at the best possible prices.

You can expect to see significant changes in 2015 as we continue this process and unveil some developments that we've been planning for a long time. We are very excited about how these can improve the way we work with our travellers.

Just a few ways we're evolving...

Better online availability – When you're planning a trip, it's a massive help to see exactly which places have space available and which places don't. Over the last three years we've built our own cutting-edge system to gather this information to help with the complex jigsaw of putting trips together. Now you can use it too, as you plan: just look under the *Availability* tab that can be found on the right side of many lodge pages. We've expanded this steadily and we hope that you will find it increasingly useful as we add to it a new tool for planning whole trips.

New reservation system – As 2015 begins, we're starting to use a new electronic reservation system, significant elements of which have been designed especially for *Expert Africa*. This has been a mammoth project, but when completely bedded in it will enable us to get much more detailed and comprehensive quotes to you faster, and provide you with better written information, tailored precisely to your trip. It should also help us to be more efficient in quoting and putting your trips

together, and in communicating with you about them.

Online booking form – In the first few months of this year we plan to give you the option to complete our booking form online. We'll use this as an opportunity to streamline the routine elements of our booking procedure, making it faster and easier for you. This will also make our handling of special requests, medical information and travel insurance details much more consistent, and will give you online control over more information about your trip.

Live foreign exchange rates – Our new quoting system will use live exchange rates, which will make our trips even better-value. This will mean that our prices will change with the currency markets, but they will continue to be fixed once a booking is made, emphasising our commitment to our key peace-of-mind guarantee: *“Once you have booked a trip with us, the price stays the same, no matter how the currency markets change before you travel.”*

More focus on our responsible approach to travel – We're as committed as ever to working in a socially and environmentally responsible way; this has long been at the heart of who we are as a company. For some years now we've done a lot of work on this, but communicated relatively little about it. We are currently conducting an extensive review to address this.

Best for... – From our whole range of 900-odd camps and lodges, we have carefully selected those which cater best for a range of special interests, from *Beach breaks* to *Birdwatching* to *Family travel*. We've put time and effort into curating and updating these over the last year and you can find our top picks under the 'Best for...' section on our website. This a great area for ideas to help you kick-start the planning of your next trip.

Our team – We are immensely proud to have retained so many experienced and dedicated professionals over the last two decades. The fantastic individuals within the company are unquestionably its greatest strength.

In 2014, our team expanded a little. We are delighted to welcome Lucy Copson back to the team; previously based in our London office, she is now heading up our new Cape Town office. Also in the southern hemisphere, Maruska Adye has returned from maternity leave to resume work in our New Zealand office – and with her, our round-the-clock telephone and email coverage resumes.

Meanwhile, in London we welcomed two new members to the team – Martha Young and Freddie Sutton – who are already far into their first roles, training as specialists in Namibia and Zambia respectively.

Do have a look at pages 26-7 where you can meet our whole team of experts: we have a great crew with real depth of experience.

As we continue evolving, *Expert Africa's* passion for Africa, and our commitment to become even better at what we do, remain undimmed. To this end, we love feedback from our travellers – be it on our trips or on how we operate – so please do let us know what you think. Meanwhile, we'll look forward to helping you plan your next trip to Africa!



Chris McIntyre
Managing Director



WHERE WE GO

We've often asked why we don't offer trips to more of Africa – Ethiopia? Uganda? Madagascar? The answer is the same: we're keen to start sending travellers, but only when we have the time to research thoroughly and become experts on the destination. That's why we've expanded so slowly over the last 20 years, and why we get such high ratings for the quality of our trips.

Each member of the team at *Expert Africa* regularly goes on independent research trips to update their knowledge of their countries. It takes a great deal of time to properly cover the areas we've known for years, and new places take even longer. So we make no apologies for not branching out faster! Instead we're sticking to our guns, regularly refreshing our knowledge and expanding our coverage slowly and steadily, ensuring our standards remain high and continuing to offer the very best trips.

EXPERT AFRICA ONLINE

Our website is more important than it's ever been. You can plan your trip using our detailed camp reports, referring to the reviews we post from our returning travellers, and checking the live availability provided by our colleagues in Africa. Check out our pictures and videos to see what places are really like, and take a bird's eye view of many camps and lodges with our satellite maps.

www.expertafrica.com

CONGO

The equatorial rainforests of central Africa have never been easy to visit. They still aren't: our trips to the Republic of Congo are decidedly adventurous. However, the vast Odzala-Kokoua National Park is worth the effort: the whole experience is like nothing else we offer. The *bais* – verdant forest clearings – and their western lowland gorilla inhabitants are fascinating.

ZAMBIA

We already have the most comprehensive Zambia programme in the business, and now we've expanded it a little further. To our reliable favourites we've added new places to stay in South Luangwa, a smart new camp in the Lower Zambezi and fresh options if you're overnighing in Lusaka.

NAMIBIA

Namibia is our most popular country, and every year sees a clutch of new guesthouses and lodges. In 2015 these include some quirky additions on the coast, a remote camp by the seasonal Hoanib River in the arid north-west, and – for adventurous travellers – new lodges along the Caprivi.

BOTSWANA

Botswana continues to go from strength to strength, with great game, pristine wilderness areas and luxurious lodges that are increasingly full. With strict restrictions limiting the numbers of visitors, changes are slow here. However, we've visited a couple of good, medium-priced camps that have come of age, and flagged up some major changes at existing camps.

RWANDA

Travellers to this small, mountainous country still concentrate largely on viewing mountain gorillas – but the focus is widening. More people are extending their stays to add chimp-trekking in the forests of Nyungwe, game-viewing in the much-expanded Akagera National Park or relaxing on the shores of Lake Kivu. Rwanda's history may be turbulent, but its friendly people make it stand out as a great destination.





KENYA

Kenya delivers some of the most rewarding safari experiences in Africa. Although it was in the news for the wrong reasons last year, its world-famous parks, reserves and conservancies are unaffected, meaning you can visit the safari areas while they're quieter than usual. For 2015 we've added new camps and lodges around Amboseli and the Chyulu Hills; in Laikipia; and in the Maasai Mara National Reserve.

SEYCHELLES

SEYCHELLES

There are no major changes to our Seychelles programme, but the islands with their sparkling waters and powder-white beaches continue to be stunning holiday locations – sometimes for stand-alone trips, sometimes as add-ons after a safari. Bird Island is particularly popular, with one of our travellers commenting, 'Our third visit to Bird, and we love the place'.

TANZANIA

The combination of big game and beautiful sandy beaches is Tanzania's strength. Some old safari camps in the Selous and Ruaha have been taken over and revamped; while a new area has opened to the public in the Serengeti National Park, complete with a new camp. Meanwhile, on Zanzibar's picture-perfect east coast, two new beach lodges are particularly worth a close look.

MALAWI

Few things happen fast in Malawi, and the opening of new areas and lodges is no different. The last few years have seen gradual, steady changes though, and Malawi now has a handful of high-quality places to stay. With a new beach lodge on the shore of Lake Malawi and Lilongwe's first boutique hotel, Malawi is little by little becoming a destination in its own right.

MOZAMBIQUE

Tourism in most of Mozambique remains in its infancy, at least as far as travellers from outside Africa are concerned. Significant changes are rare, and areas like the Quirimbas Archipelago remain very quiet. Slightly more developments are happening in the south, and we're excited that Bengueria Island Lodge has been bought and completely re-worked by Mnemba Island's owners. Very promising indeed!

ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe is changing fast: more remote corners of the country, where tourism was thought to have died, are springing back to life, and there's been a steady stream of lodge openings. We re-visited Zimbabwe in 2014, seeing new options around Victoria Falls and new camps in Hwange National Park, as well as revisiting the fascinating UNESCO World Heritage site of Great Zimbabwe for the first time in 15 years.

SOUTH AFRICA

Three separate research trips have completely refreshed our offerings in the Western Cape. Standards at small hotels and guesthouses can change over time – but it's great to see old favourites still shining! For 2015 we've added a lovely new boutique hotel in Cape Town; some great locations in the wine region; and several magical spots near Plettenburg Bay, the Garden Route's smartest stop.

NAMIBIA 2015

Namibia surprises almost everyone: 'the best Africa trip we've taken' is a common comment, even from some of our most experienced Africa travellers. For the last three years Namibia's currency (the South African rand) has weakened steadily, so trips here in 2015 offer the best value in years.

Martha and Liz made their first detailed research trips to Namibia in 2014, and both came back in awe, planning further research in 2015. This original research is vital, as new properties often pop up in Namibia and they're a very mixed bag. Below are some of our highlights for 2015, with page numbers referring to our current 2014–15 brochure.



“ My time with the San bushmen at Nhoma Camp was an experience I'll never forget. We went out collecting honey, picking wild fruits and berries, digging up edible tubers and hunting for springhare – a rodent like a cross between a gerbil and a little kangaroo (to be honest I was quite relieved we didn't catch one!). Then we came back to camp and made jewellery, played traditional games and learned San dances. An absolute highlight for me was making fire – spinning a hard stick against a block of wood with my bare hands. Hard work and frustrating to begin with, but what a sense of achievement when the tinder caught light! The San culture is fast disappearing and I feel very privileged that I was able to gain a genuine insight into their way of life. ”

Tracy Lederer

SWAKOPMUND & WALVIS BAY

One of these coastal towns is on most itineraries around Namibia. Even if you aren't visiting Namibia for its towns or coast, you may well want to use time in one of them as a springboard for activities in the desert – or out on the ocean.

Until recently, most hotels here were very traditional; we're now seeing some really interesting, original properties springing up. **Organic Square** is a new, privately owned, luxury guesthouse in central Swakopmund (see page 38). Minimalist design with modern art isn't common in this conservative town, and neither is the promotion of organic food. In fact, from the minute you swing open the wide wooden entrance door, this place feels like a breath of ocean air.



If you're passing through, but don't want to stay in town, the **Desert Breeze Lodge** has a stunning location on low granite cliffs overlooking the dunes. The quirky curves and bright colours of the chalets, set against the desert's sandy backdrop, add to the feeling of being in a slightly different world – it's hard to believe you're just minutes from Swakopmund.

If you know Namibia well, you may remember the old Strand Hotel. It had the best location in town, on an artificial promontory that was part of a long-abandoned harbour project. In its place, the new **Beach Hotel** is now rising: it's going to be big, but it has a great location with coveted sea views.

By contrast, several small guesthouses stand on the shores of Walvis Bay Lagoon. Of these, the new **Oyster Box** is making waves as a smart option, with its chic beach theme and wrap-around terrace – great for al fresco dining on warmer days.

SKELETON COAST & KAOKOLAND

Namibia's Skeleton Coast National Park has always had great allure: a wilderness by the ocean in one of the world's oldest deserts. We were very sad to see the Skeleton Coast Camp close its doors a few years ago, apparently because of an issue with the government's proposed lease.

Now we're excited about the opening of the new **Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp** (see page 57) on the western side of the Palmwag Concession. That's not actually on the Skeleton Coast, but the camp does have access to explore the coast and promises high levels of design and comfort in the starkly beautiful Hoanib River valley. Our first travellers who stayed here gave it top marks.



RUNDU & THE CAPRIVI STRIP

Rundu (see page 58) is the gateway to the Caprivi, its lush riverine vegetation contrasting with the aridity of much of Namibia. To date, Rundu has been on most visitors' itineraries as a one-night stop at a riverside lodge. The new **Taranga Safari Lodge** promises a step-change in terms of luxury, and may win some arguments for longer stays!

To the east, **River Dance Lodge** is further than ideal from the biodiverse Mahango National Park (see page 58), but otherwise we were bowled over by this tiny, owner-run lodge, raised on stilts. It offers a delightful base for exploring in three ways: Mahango in your own car; Bwabwata National Park on guided game drives; or the Kavango River by boat.

At the eastern end of Bwabwata (see page 59), we have great faith in the quality of the new **Nambwa Lodge**, which has been built by a very reliable owner who we know well. It opens in early 2015 as the only lodge inside the national park, and will offer game drives (including night drives), boat trips, and guided walks within the park.



SOUTH AFRICA 2015

The Cape of South Africa always appeals thanks to its spectacular scenery, great food and wine, and the many attractions of Cape Town. One of our team, Lucy, lives here permanently; three others made trips here in 2014 to take a fresh look at what is on offer. With a plethora of B&Bs, guesthouses and lodges to choose from, we have hand-picked a prime selection. These cover different tastes, styles and budgets – each with different kinds of travellers in mind. Here are a few words on our latest additions, with page numbers indicating where they fit in our current 2014–15 brochure.



“After decades of African travel, taking my children has been a revelation. In two action-packed trips, we’ve paddled with penguins, cooked on camp fires, explored vast rock pools and walked with wild cheetah. Kwandwe, in the Eastern Cape, proved a real favourite! Tracking lion there was thrilling, but so was studying scorpions and dung on foot. Ant-lions, a fresh kill and an old elephant skeleton were all utterly captivating for the children. Their enthusiasm was infectious; a continuous reminder of what first drew me to the continent.”

Chris McIntyre

“On safari, I got to shine the spotlight for our guide. It was brilliant! The puff adders were really interesting, and I loved holding the eland skeleton...and finding his missing leg!”

James McIntyre, age 5

CAPE TOWN – WATERFRONT & CITY

Our newest addition in Cape Town (see page 73) is **Four Rosmead**, which has a convenient, central location, with 360-degree panoramic views taking in Table Mountain, Lions Head and Signal Hill, as well as the city. It’s privately owned and small, with only eight rooms, and we found it a very welcoming and comfortable place to stay. The outdoor space isn’t huge but they have used what they have very well with a small pool as well as gardens, and those views are amazing!

WINE REGION

Situated on a working vineyard on the slopes of the Hottentot-Holland Mountains, a few kilometres from Franschhoek (see page 74), **La Petite Ferme** immediately impressed us with stunning views across the vineyards in the valley below. It has a wide choice of rooms, from fairly rustic self-catering cottages to smart suites with private verandas and plunge pools, all decorated in a French country style. They offer guided tours to their cellars, rounded off with wine-tasting. We loved it!



If you’re after peace and quite in a beautiful rural setting, then it’s hard to beat **Angala**. It stands between Stellenbosch and Franschhoek, in the foothills of the Simonsberg Mountains – which make the views from the main area and pool (a unique, self-filtering eco pool) very picturesque. Angala’s nine spacious, airy rooms all vary in design, and all have private verandas and gardens offering some privacy. We liked it here and felt that it would be good for both couples and families.

La Petite Dauphine is only 2km from the heart of Franschhoek yet it feels as if you’re miles out of town. The suites are scattered around the grounds of this working fruit and wine estate, nestled among manicured gardens, plum trees and vines. All are very comfortable and there’s a super restaurant, which is also open to non-residents. If you like doing your own thing in a relaxed environment then this is a lovely place to stay.

As new places open, one established place to stay, **Rusthof Country House**, has closed its doors for an extended period. It is now under new management who, we’re informed, are making dramatic changes to the build and décor. Keep an eye on our website for further developments here.

GARDEN ROUTE – PLETTENBERG BAY

The small, family-friendly **Bayside Lodge** has a great location just a couple of roads back from the main beach at Robberg, on the outskirts of Plettenberg Bay (see page 79). Currently Bayside’s six fairly simple rooms are great value, but in March 2014 it was bought by new owners, Bernie and Adrienne, who we’ve known for years since they ran a couple of great camps in Botswana and Zambia. Their approach is all about high levels of hospitality and they plan to spend the next year or two upgrading the lodge – which we expect to be something of a rising star!

Christiana Lodge is also owner-run, but has a very different feel. It’s a stylish, modern guest house, with 11 individually furnished and decorated rooms, plus a one-bedroom self-catering apartment. This is right on the edge of Plettenberg Bay, close to Robberg Beach and Nature Reserve, and we think it’ll be the place of choice for couples who like contemporary design.

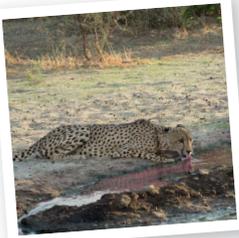
A five-minute drive north of Plettenberg Bay, **Emily Moon River Lodge** has a restaurant with a very good reputation locally and ten stylish suites. Most of these overlook the Bitou River and its surrounding wetlands – so it’s a particularly natural choice for lovers of nature and birdwatchers.

Fynbos Ridge is another small, owner-run property located ten minutes west of Plettenberg Bay. It has five comfortable rooms in the manor house and three two-bedroom, self-catering cottages with stunning views of the valley and mountains beyond. There’s a natural swimming pool surrounded by *fynbos* and you’ll often find guinea fowl on the lawn.



BOTSWANA 2015

Botswana has always been a big favourite with *Expert Africa* travellers for its fabulous wildlife and the uniquely exclusive experiences it offers in its pristine wilderness areas. We revisited Botswana in 2014, reacquainting ourselves with old haunts and adding the best new places to our programme. Change tends to be slow in Botswana's camps and lodges – it's all about evolution rather than revolution, but we've picked out the most noteworthy changes and additions, with page numbers to indicate where they fit in our current 2014–15 brochure.



“While staying at *Tau Pan Camp*, which sits on a low ridge overlooking the pan in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, I spent the evening on the deck of my chalet and counted six separate lightning storms. These stretched out across the pan, lighting up the sky, signifying the start of the rainy season – a spectacular light show that kept me enthralled. The views from the camp are expansive and the next morning while eating breakfast we spotted a nervous cheetah approaching the waterhole. Nervous because upwind a Kalahari black-maned lion approached from the opposite side, completely oblivious to the presence of the cheetah. The cheetah nervously positioned itself behind a bush not willing to have a confrontation with the large male lion but desperate enough for a drink not to turn and run away!”

Chloe Henderson

KHWAI RIVER

Our newest offering is in the Khwai Community Concession (see page 91), which we visited early in 2014. Situated on the outskirts of the nearby Khwai Village, the inexpensive **Sango Camp** has just six tented rooms and is more functional than stylish. It won't suit everyone, but if you want a good game-viewing experience on a budget, albeit in an area that's often busy, Sango is a good option.



THE CHOBE RIVERFRONT

The Chobe Riverfront is one of the busier areas that we deal with in Botswana: so much so that many of our travellers omit it completely. That said, it does have superb game-viewing in the dry season, and for this we usually recommend a couple of lodges on the (quieter) western side: **Muchenje Safari Lodge** and the new and more upmarket **Ngoma Safari Lodge**.

Having spent a week revisiting virtually all the camps and lodges in Chobe, we have to report that we really liked **Chobe Elephant Camp**, also situated to the west, a little further along the escarpment from Muchenje (see page 102).

Opened just over a year ago, the relatively spartan chalets here have walls made from 'rendered sandbags', and while it is a little smarter than its sister camp, Sango (mentioned above), it still aims squarely to offer good value. Chobe Elephant Camp's simplicity gives it a camp-like atmosphere, which we loved, and it's got bags more personality than many of the larger lodges in the area.

SELINDA RESERVE

We revisited the camps in the Selinda at the end of 2013 and returned again more recently to spend some time at **Selinda Explorers Camp** (see page 104). This smart, tented camp first opened in August 2012, but was originally used only as a private camp, for the exclusive use of one group at a time. This

situation changed in mid-2014, when its four tents were opened to bookings from individuals and couples, between March and November.

While it's quite rustic in some ways – think bucket showers – Selinda Explorers Camp is very smart, aiming to evoke the style of the early explorers, with a hint of something Bedouin. Originally it focused on canoeing and walking, it's now also enthusiastic about game drives in this predator-rich area. For a bit of style under canvas, in a superb concession for big game, we loved it!



SANDBE RESERVE

We haven't seen this rebuild yet, but **Sandibe Safari Lodge** reopened in September 2014 after a much-awaited remodelling (see page 98).

The old concrete buildings have been replaced by largely wooden structures, which aim to be contemporary in style and much more luxurious.

Sandibe has grown, and now has 12 spacious suites on elevated decks dotted along the Santantadibe River, each with their own plunge pool.

While most visitors to Botswana will be unsuccessful in their quest to see the elusive pangolin, Sandibe is perhaps trying to compensate for this by offering a camp inspired in its design by the small manidae!

While it's sad to see yet another of Botswana's lodges hike its prices, we are delighted that Sandibe is up and running again – particularly as its concession has some superb game-viewing.



ZIMBABWE 2015

Zimbabwe was visited by more tourists in 2014 than in any year since its mid-1990s heyday. As you'd expect, new places are opening up to cater for the increase and Nick has recently made an extensive research trip to sort the wheat from the chaff. He looked at new places in Victoria Falls and Hwange; spent more time in Matobo Hills; linked across to Great Zimbabwe; visited the Eastern Highlands; and finally scouted out the best Harare has to offer. He came back to the office even more enthusiastic, convinced that Zimbabwe's great game and guides make for a world-class safari experience. Here, we highlight the country's latest additions, complete with page numbers to indicate where they're located on the maps in our current 2014-15 brochure.



“ I feel privileged to have spent time tracking black rhino with a research unit based in Hwange National Park. We climbed up and down steep hills in the remote northwestern region of the national park, guided by telemetry, always getting close but never quite managing to glimpse one particular individual. Eventually, at the end of the second day and aided by an anti-poaching unit we managed to spot a female in thick vegetation. It was amazing to spend time in a wilderness so remote, fantastic to see such a rare sight of a critically endangered animal and humbling to meet the men and women charged with protecting them. ”

Nick Hobbs

VICTORIA FALLS

Experienced African travellers who have already visited the Victoria Falls (see page 119) should consider the new **Zambezi Sands**, a luxury camp beside the river, upstream from the falls. Meanwhile, in town, the venerable low-budget **Sprayview Hotel** has undergone an extensive refurbishment and moved upmarket a little, and it now offers 65 modern, comfortable rooms set amid lush gardens. Larger groups and families should consider **Victoria Falls Safari Suites** – six brand-new, modern, furnished two and three-bedroom apartments situated in the grounds of Victoria Falls Safari Lodge.

HWANGE NATIONAL PARK

In 2014 Nick visited three new lodges around Hwange (see page 120). **Camelthorn Lodge** is secluded, stylish and very substantial, and built and furnished to a high quality. It's being run by an experienced team, who have a long history in Zimbabwe, and it stands in a remote spot just outside the south-east corner of the national park. About 3km from Camelthorn, its sister camp **Bomani Tented Camp** is less substantial, less of a



designer project, and also less expensive – so it's a promising choice if you're a price-conscious traveller wanting a genuine wilderness experience.

Further north, it's good to see another new camp, **Elephant's Eye**, opening in a convenient location near the park's main airstrip. This has eight tented chalets on stilts overlooking a floodlit waterhole. It offers excellent value, but bear in mind that game drives start with a 13km drive to the national park.

We knew **Linkwasha Camp** as a great camp in the 1990s; perhaps symbolic of the renaissance in Zimbabwe's tourism fortunes, it is now being completely rebuilt. The latest incarnation, due to open in mid-2015, has tents which have already been billed as the most luxurious in Hwange.

BULAWAYO

Many travellers visit Bulawayo (see page 127) as a day trip from Matobo Hills (see page 126). However, for a short stop in town we'd recommend **Nesbitt Castle**, or the newly discovered and very suburban **Banff Lodge**. Banff isn't the height of sophistication, but we thought it had friendly and efficient service, and pretty good food.

One slightly sad note: 2014 saw the members of **The Bulawayo Club** take back responsibility for running the club – and thus our confidence in the institution's ability to cater to our travellers has evaporated.

GREAT ZIMBABWE

The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Great Zimbabwe vanished from most travel itineraries during the country's troubles, but is now becoming more accessible. We revisited this area in 2014 and came away feeling very positive: seeing the breathtaking ancient ruins offers a striking contrast to the more traditional safari activities.

The large hotels in this area aren't great but the modest **Norma Jeane's Lake View Resort** is the best option. This converted old farmhouse is set in beautiful gardens, with an elevated view across the vast Lake Mutirikwe (formerly Lake Kyle). Norma Jeane's isn't large, luxurious or modern; in fact the décor is positively dated; but the staff are friendly, the food tasty and it's only a ten-minute drive from the ruins.

HARARE

Zimbabwe's vibrant capital is one of the main gateways to the country, and we were impressed by some very good places to stay here. The famous **Meikles Hotel** maintains high standards as a business hotel in the heart of the city, with one wing now looking much smarter after a recent renovation. In more suburban locations we had a good look around two smart and quite leafy lodges: **Armada Lodge** is an old farmhouse conversion standing in tranquil gardens; and **Amanzi Lodge**, also with lovely grounds, has 16 beautifully designed rooms, each themed on a different African country.



ZAMBIA 2015

With high game densities, some of Africa's best walking safaris and a sprinkling of great owner-run camps, Zambia is a top destination for wildlife and wilderness enthusiasts. *Expert Africa* already has the most comprehensive Zambia programme in the African travel industry, so when Eleanor and Freddie revisited Zambia on separate trips in 2014, they were mostly visiting places we already know and love. However, a handful of places are new to us, and a couple of these, below, stand out as worthy additions to our programme.



“ I was walking in South Luangwa National Park with my guide and a park ranger, enjoying the bird song and the company of several impala grazing nearby, when I was startled by a baboon's alarm call which left the bush apparently abandoned of wildlife. After silently creeping through the bush we came across some fresh tracks, leading us to a beautiful female leopard having a mid-morning drink from the Luangwa River. Using the sounds, smells and tracks around us to find a leopard added a new level of intensity and excitement to the sighting, and really helped to bring the bush to life. ”

Freddie Sutton

LOWER ZAMBEZI NATIONAL PARK

Anabezi Luxury Tented Camp is the newest addition to the Lower Zambezi National Park (see page 140 of our brochure), having opened in April 2014. This is the park's easternmost camp, in an exciting area with great walking and particularly high densities of game. The 11 spacious tented suites, each with its own plunge pool, are now the most luxurious offerings in the Lower Zambezi – and the experienced management team, and excellent food and guides, all add to the high-quality experience. That said, if you're a safari purist you might feel the camp's style is a little divorced from the surrounding bush.

A sister camp to Anabezi, called **Amanzi**, is being built a couple of kilometres downstream. We've been promised it will open in mid-2015 with four tented rooms and a more rustic style than Anabezi.

SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK

While revisiting South Luangwa (see page 142) this year, we took time to get to know **Lion Camp** better. We've seen it a few times over the years – mainly for guidebook research – but had discounted it after some negative experiences. However, having received a series of good reports, we decided to spend a few nights here in September 2014 and we're now confident in recommending it to you, not least because it has a very appealing price tag.

Lion Camp is in a prime game-viewing area, and has a superb location, overlooking the plain from the edge of a small oxbow lagoon. Even the wildlife visible from the camp itself is impressive, with animals coming down to the waterhole to drink



throughout the day. The nine raised tents feel very solid and permanent, so it will suit you if you want some creature comforts. Though if you're an old Luangwa hand, you might be looking for a simpler bushcamp experience. So come here expecting not just this wildlife-rich section of the park, but also lots of raised wooden decking, a swimming pool and a shop.

LIUWA PLAIN NATIONAL PARK

In the past we've offered trips to **Liuwa Plain National Park** (see page 155) with *Robin Pope Safaris*. The bad news is that they won't be operating in Liuwa in 2015;



the good news is that there are plans for a more permanent operation to start here, owned and operated by another top Zambian safari company. Starting in May 2015, four- or five-night trips will operate from the existing **Matamanene Camp**, while construction is finished on the brand-new, high-end **Kokomo Camp**, due to open in 2016.

LUSAKA

A few boutique properties have opened in Lusaka in 2014 (see page 154) – broadening the range of overnight options and raising the quality bar. **Latitude 15°** has just 18 rooms and a very modern style, complemented by plenty of colourful African art. The result is a minimalist, chic, ethnic style that we really like.

The recently refurbished and newly reopened **Lilayi Lodge** also hit our radar this year (we first stayed here in 1995), and now places a special emphasis on good food and wine. Although it's not the closest hotel to the airport, the chance to visit a nearby elephant orphanage can make it a more interesting base for a longer stay in Lusaka.



MALAWI 2015

Malawi is becoming more and more popular as a stand-alone destination in its own right. In the past, it tended to be better known as an add-on to a safari in Zambia, with Lake Malawi itself being the main draw. Now, however, with established parks such as Majete and Liwonde, and the regenerated Nkhotoakota, visitors are staying in Malawi for their whole trip, and combining a safari with a relaxing stay nearby on the sandy shores fringing the lake.



“ One of my lasting memories of my trips to Malawi is the extraordinary friendliness of its people. They're so welcoming to visitors and very proud of their country. Wherever you go you're greeted with a smile. Most lodges in Malawi offer village visits and people are always happy to show you around their school or clinic, or let you photograph them mending their boats and fishing nets on the lakeshore – though do ask first! I can perfectly see why Malawi is often called 'the warm heart of Africa'. ”

Claire Scott

We visited Malawi twice over the last year (Claire in November 2013 and Eleanor in September 2014), to update ourselves on existing camps and lodges, explore the country's new properties and review the state of wildlife conservation here. Here we present a selection of our findings, with page numbers referring to the current 2014–15 brochure.

THE LAKESHORE

New to our Malawi programme, **Blue Zebra Lodge** is reached on a short boat ride to Nankoma Island after a two-hour road transfer from Lilongwe. The lodge opened in July 2013, and is already exceptionally popular with expats and resident Malawians as a good-value, easily accessible beach retreat.

The lovely beach here is set on a sheltered bay, and there's a pool looking out across the lake, with a bar area just behind. It's quite small, with just 13 rooms, all with stunning views of the lake. There's an impressive variety of watersports on offer, including kayaking, snorkelling, tubing, wakeboarding, waterskiing and scuba diving. For relaxation, consider a massage or a relaxing stroll around the island on a well-kept footpath.

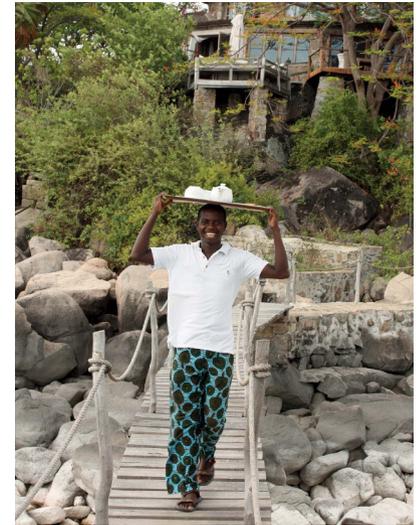
Although we've always featured **Danforth Lodge** on the southern lakeshore (see page 163), it's a few years since any of our team has visited it. Our recent visit was a revelation – it's a gem. You could mistake it for being only about watersports (they have all the gear for serious divers, sailors and board enthusiasts), but it's also a lovely spot just to relax beside the lake. As an owner-run lodge with a personal touch, the food here is really good and it's more affordable than the nearby **Pumulani** (see page 160).

LIWONDE NATIONAL PARK

In July 2014 we were eagerly awaiting the opening of *Robin Pope Safaris'* new camp in the southern part of Liwonde National Park, **Miyala**. Sadly, due to a misunderstanding with the park authorities, the camp has been shelved. This is a great shame for the park, for travellers to this area, and for the local economy. We hope that this will be resolved, but sadly we have little optimism and we're not holding our breath.

LILONGWE

Two years ago the owners of the smart **Kaya Mawa** (see page 161) opened a boutique hotel in Lilongwe called **Latitude 13** (sister hotel to the new **Latitude 15** hotel in Lusaka). With lots of black and white décor, you might find this modern, stylish setup rather stark (it even has a black swimming pool) – but it is now the best place to stay in Lilongwe: a very comfortable base for a night or two. It also has a very good, if slightly pricey, restaurant which has become popular with locals in the know. The word on the street is that they're planning to expand ... watch this space!



MAJETE WILDLIFE RESERVE

Just two hours west of Blantyre, in the Majete Wildlife Reserve, **Mkulumadzi** (see page 163) is a stylish lodge that first opened in 2011, and has since become very popular with our travellers. Lion and leopard were reintroduced here shortly after the opening. Leopard sightings have increased significantly over the last year and there are now estimated to be about 12 of these beautiful cats. Sable antelope and eland are seen very regularly; roan slightly less. More easily spotted are the reserve's 300-odd elephant and 1,000 or so buffalo. Most excitingly, a black rhino calf was born in 2014, which brings the number of this highly endangered species in Majete up to 14. The best location for rhino-spotting is the lodge's photographic hide during full moon: guests can reckon on seeing them about once a month on average.



MOZAMBIQUE 2015

Mozambique's pristine and usually deserted beaches remain the top reason to visit – although with 2,500km of coastline and a couple of protected marine archipelagos, that's no great surprise. Unusually for *Expert Africa*, we haven't found any new lodges to add to the Mozambique programme for 2015. However there has still been quite a bit of change here, with two older lodges re-opening under different ownership. This news is detailed below, along with an update on Gorongosa National Park, about which there has been great speculation, and which we know some of our regular travellers are especially keen to hear about.



“I've dived all over the world, but always wanted to dive in Mozambique. I wasn't disappointed and I hugely enjoyed the diving from Vamizi. One particularly memorable dive will stay with me forever. We headed out to the site Neptunes – known for its density of white tipped reef sharks, as well as stunning corals and variety of reef fish. These we saw in abundance, but it was the rare sight of two hammerhead sharks, and the chance to follow them through the eerie deep blue, that lead this to be the best dive I have ever done.”

Eleanor Dunkels

BENGUERRA ISLAND

Originally built more than 20 years ago, **Benguerra Island Lodge** (see page 169 of our brochure) was taken over by a top-quality safari operator in 2013. Since then, it has been closed for major refurbishments, and is scheduled to re-open in April 2015 – although the details seem to be cloaked in secrecy. That said, we do know that the new lodge will be much more contemporary, with cool neutral tones throughout, and it will still have 13 rooms split into three different types. Their individual construction will remain the same – as will their locations right by the beach. There are two *cabanas* which have a small plunge pool on a private deck; ten larger *casitas*; and a family suite with two double en-suite bedrooms. For more information, do check with us.

GORONGOSA NATIONAL PARK

Currently there are still no reliable options for accessing Gorongosa National Park (see page 170), and sadly as a result we won't be able to include it in any trips for some



time. Politically driven skirmishes erupted in this region in 2014 and consequently the opening of the very promising **Kubatana Camp** was deferred indefinitely.

There is, however, another operation looking at opening up in the park, and if this goes ahead we'd be delighted to look again at sending visitors to Mozambique's very best safari area. Talk to us for the latest news.



PEMBA & THE MAINLAND

Pemba's one decent hotel was recently taken over by the Avani chain, a well-established group from southern Asia.

The **Avani Pemba Beach Hotel** (see page 172) has had some soft refurbishments, but otherwise remains largely the same as before. Its significant features include a lovely location overlooking the sea, decent rooms and a good restaurant.

We think it's a good base for an overnight stay when connecting to remoter parts of the Quirimbas Archipelago (see page 173).

QUIRIMBAS ARCHIPELAGO

In Mozambique's far north, there are one or two new lodge names – but relatively little real change.

The Rani Resorts group, owner of three beach lodges in Mozambique, is now working with the Anantara chain. Anantara, which also has a strong foothold in southern Asia, first took over the running of Indigo Bay Island Resort in the Bazaruto Archipelago (see page 168) in December 2013. Subsequently, through 2014, they have also taken over Medjumbe and Matemo Island Resorts (see page 173).

In the short term, **Anantara Medjumbe Island Resort & Spa** will remain largely unchanged, with a little soft furnishing renewal planned imminently. Then we expect fairly extensive refurbishments to take place in the rooms throughout 2015.

Anantara Matemo Island Resort was closed for rather more major renovations at the time of writing. It is expected to re-open in 2015 with a variety of room categories, but currently it is all in the planning stage and we know little more than that. Call us for the latest on this hotel.



TANZANIA 2015

Tanzania is one of our most popular destinations; its diverse landscapes hold many attractions. There's the Serengeti in the north, world-famous for the Great Wildebeest Migration; the more remote and less-travelled Selous and Ruaha parks in the south; and the far-flung western parks, Katavi and Mahale Mountains, renowned for fantastic primate viewing and a real sense of wilderness. Game viewing aside, Tanzania's beaches are reason enough to visit this magnificent country, with its stunning mainland coastline and the tropical islands of Zanzibar, Mafia, Pemba and Fanjove. It hasn't been a year of major change in Tanzania, but certain developments have brought improvements. Eleanor and James researched many of these in 2014 and the most interesting of their discoveries are below, with page numbers indicating their location in our current 2014–15 brochure.



“Hardly ten minutes into our morning game drive, in the Selous Game Reserve, we saw a pack of wild dogs. Animated, with ears pricked and heads low, they ran down a dusty track. They stopped occasionally to roll in elephant dung; our guide informed us this was to mask their scent. Before long, one dog broke from the pack, whilst the others waited in the bush behind. Moments later a startled impala hurtled towards us with the lone dog in hot pursuit. They ran past us at full pelt, only to be ambushed by the pack behind. Witnessing a successful hunt from start to finish by one of Africa's most endangered predators is something I will never forget.”

James Denny

SELOUS GAME RESERVE

The biggest development in the Selous has been the change of ownership and rejuvenation of **Azura Selous** – previously Amara Selous (see page 185). When we were in the Selous in June, this had not quite reopened, but Liz is visiting later this year to check out the changes. We're promised a high-spec, luxurious getaway with the accent on relaxation and indulgence, which should appeal to honeymooners. What's more, the substantial nature of the rooms, the positive attitude of the owners, and the extensive programme of activities for children (aged six and over) may also make it one of the best family options in the reserve. It's perhaps worth noting that although Azura stands beside the Rufiji River, the land around is undulating and far from the popular floodplain around which most camps are located. Thus unlike most of the Selous' camps, we'd expect the game at Azura Selous to be at its best early in the season (June–July), rather than later (September–October).



RUAHA NATIONAL PARK

It's a similar story in Ruaha: there have been no new camps in the past 12 months, but two that we know very well have changed hands. James was one of the first guests at **Kigelia Camp** (see page 190) following a six-month closure in 2014. We were pleased to find no drastic changes, just a welcome refurbishment and brand-new safari vehicles. The food, service and guiding has also improved since the takeover. Kigelia's six simple tents remain very much in touch with their surroundings, and this is fast becoming one of the better options in the park.

Kwihala (see page 190) has long been a great safari camp, with glowing praise from many visitors and a real following of experienced travellers who return here. In 2014 it was taken over by a relatively large safari operator that runs many camps in northern Tanzania, and we were keen to see how this would pan out. We were delighted to find that neither the feel nor the ethos of the camp that we know and love have changed. The experienced specialist guides who work at Kwihala have stayed on, and the camp's focus on guiding is as strong as ever. There are also plans to open a sister camp nearby. If you love small camps – put this high on your wishlist for this year!

SERENGETI NATIONAL PARK

The most exciting development in the Serengeti in 2014 was the opening of the new **Namiri Plains Camp**, sister camp to Dunia (see page 210). Namiri, which means 'big cat' in Swahili, is situated in the central Serengeti. Though relatively near to Seronera, one of the park's busiest areas, Namiri Plains is in a part of the national park that has until now been restricted to researchers studying cheetahs, and thus inaccessible to the public. The area promises to be fairly quiet for a while, and is said to hold one of the highest cheetah densities in Africa; we're looking forward to visiting it this year!

ZANZIBAR

Sunshine Marine Lodge is an exciting new property, identical in style, feel and décor to its older sister, Sunshine Hotel (see page 224). Perched on a coral cliff, Sunshine Marine has magnificent views of Mnemba Island directly opposite. If you don't mind a five-minute walk to the beach, then this lodge is excellent value for money. Its vibrant feel attracts a slightly younger crowd than is often the case on Zanzibar, and James was particularly impressed by its state-of-the-art dive school when he visited in July.

Another change along Zanzibar's coastline is at **Kono Kono**, which has reopened after extensive renovations. It's larger now, with 24 villas and a lovely new pool-bar area leading onto its huge, white (and largely deserted) beach. Set in a fantastic location in the Menai Bay Conservation Area, on the western tip of the Michamvi Peninsula (see page 225), Kono Kono is one of Zanzibar's few lodges with a great beach and a good sunset. It's a promising choice with great potential – and we're optimistic that it will, in time, mellow to give a little more character.



KENYA 2015

2014 was a challenging year for Kenya: to be fair, it could do with a better press, since the legitimate security concerns are largely confined to the remote north-eastern areas along the Somali border, hundreds of kilometres from the safe national parks that are the focus for most visitors. Kenya remains Africa's second biggest safari destination after South Africa – justifiably so in our opinion, as it has some of the continent's very best camps and lodges and most rewarding wildlife-viewing in a scenically spectacular and culturally stimulating environment. Richard, Eleanor and Chris all made trips to Kenya in 2014, re-visiting old favourites and seeking out new discoveries. What follows is a brief rundown of the highlights from the latest trips, with page numbers to guide you to where they would be located in our current 2014-15 brochure.



“ I was astonished to see mating black rhinos in the Mara Triangle section of the Maasai Mara National Reserve this year. My very patient driver/guide from the Mara Serena first saw them miles off, then went out of his way to put me in a good spot for photos, while carefully sticking to park rules about where we could drive. A wonderful experience and I was the only witness... The guides in the Mara get better every year. ”

Richard Trillo

AMBOSELI AND THE CHYULU HILLS

We loved **Campi ya Kanzi**, at the foot of the magical Chyulu Hills (see page 266). As well as having seriously good wildlife and the amazing cloud forest at the peaks of the Chyulus, the owners have a serious commitment to the Maasai community of the 1000km² Kuku Group Ranch, with schools and clinics supported by daily conservancy fees. It's not a cheap option, but if you're an incurable safari addict or want something a little different, do have a look.

The centrepiece of the relatively recent Tawi Conservancy (adjoining the eastern boundary of Amboseli) **Tawi Lodge**, is an attractive construction in a grove of acacias, with rooms in large, comfy thatched cottages. With its pool and discrete electric fencing, we think this would be rather good for families, and there's plenty of good game-viewing.

LAIKIPIA

In the far south of Laikipia (see page 252), with Mount Kenya rising up to the east, **Sandai** is a delightful German-owned farmstay, run by Petra Allmendinger – artist, traveller and some-time tour leader who is deeply committed to her farm and the local Kikuyu community. It's a very restful place to chill, with lovely gardens, and while the wildlife at the farm is limited, you can ride and go on excursions to Solio and into the Aberdare National Park.

For lots of wildlife, including superb rhino-viewing, **Sweetwaters Serena Lodge** is the oldest place to stay on the Ol Pejeta Conservancy. This large bush hotel has high standards of service and a choice of tented rooms or comfortable chalets, most of which have views towards the floodlit, fenced-off waterhole.

NAIROBI

If you're looking for unbeatable comfort and style in Nairobi (see page 271), then **Hemingways Nairobi**, – one of the capital's newest properties – is a beautifully finished place to stay, with excellent food. They have the only kitchen in Kenya with a Jospier grill, which does amazing steaks, and there are lovely grounds and first-class spa facilities.



This is surprisingly good rhino country, and you'll get good meals and first-rate guiding with an exclusive vehicle and guide throughout your stay.

One of the few lodges in the very well managed Mara Triangle part of the reserve, **Serena Mara** is a 74-room bush hotel dating from the 1980s, with rows of neat,

Maasai-style rooms running down the hillside, and superb views. If you're looking for dependable value for money, this is one of the best mainstream choices.

Tipilikwani Mara Camp is a good-value camp located on the outside edge of the reserve, overlooking the Talek River. With 20 spacious, recently refurbished tents and a good pool, it has direct access to the reserve via a private bridge.

THE MAASAI MARA CONSERVANCIES

Wilderness Camp, on the site of the former *Dorobo Bush Camp*, has five newly installed, private and spacious ensuite tents, set in a peaceful valley. Each tent has a private terrace. We haven't stayed there yet, but it looks very promising and the area is quite wild.

Richard Branson's **Mahali Mzuri** is part of his *Virgin Limited Edition* range, and has gone much further than any other camp in the Mara in the use of concrete, steel cables and German synthetic membranes in place of canvas. It won't be to everyone's taste – indeed if you're a safari purist it would be anathema – but it has enlarged the Olare Motorogi conservancy, bringing income into a poor area of the Mara ecosystem.





MEET THE TEAM

We believe that to get the best for your trip to Africa, you need impartial advice from people with first-hand experience of what you're thinking of doing, like our team! All of us have travelled extensively through Africa, and for most of us the connection runs much deeper – it's part of our DNA.

Contacting us

To contact us individually, our email addresses follow the form:

first-name.second-name@expertafrica.com
(Please send a copy to info@expertafrica.com)

Chris McIntyre

Managing Director



In the late 1980s, I joined VSO to teach children in rural Zimbabwe. That three-year immersion into African life started my love affair with the continent.

Commissions to write ground-breaking guidebooks fuelled this passion, and the intensive planning for research trips led naturally to organising holidays for others. I founded *Expert Africa* in 1997 and feel incredibly lucky to be doing something that I love: introducing others to this fantastic continent, pioneering responsible tourism and leading a talented team of fellow enthusiasts!

Lucy Copson

Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique & Seychelles



I have been privileged throughout my 17 years in travel to experience some incredible destinations. I joined *Expert Africa* in 2005 and have

travelled extensively in Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique's Bazaruto Archipelago and Seychelles. The sunny shores of Cape Town have now enticed me back home, and I'm excited to have recently started a South African office for *Expert Africa*.

Maruska Adye

Namibia, Botswana, Zambia & Tanzania



My affinity with Africa began as a child, growing up in Tanzania. I returned to backpack through Africa years later, but was captivated by Namibia and stayed

for six years, working for a travel company. In 2003 I left, joining *Expert Africa* in London – although I've now returned home to New Zealand, where I run a satellite office, arranging holidays whilst our UK team sleeps! I enjoy regular visits to Africa, and helping others discover its attractions is my dream job!

Eleanor Dunkels

Tanzania, Zanzibar, Mozambique, Zambia, Kenya, Congo & Rwanda



Africa has always been a passion for me. I backpacked, volunteered and worked throughout southern and East Africa during my teenage years, before joining

Expert Africa in 2006 after university. In the past eight years I have helped set up our Kenya and Congo programmes, and contributed hugely to our Tanzania, Rwanda, Mozambique, and Zambia programmes.

James Denny

Tanzania & Zanzibar



Having travelled widely, Africa has always interested me the most – particularly its wildlife. This stems from my time working on a lion monitoring project

in South Africa, where I also gained my level one FGASA qualification. After graduating from Newcastle University I joined *Expert Africa* at the beginning of 2013. My first few research trips have concentrated on southern Tanzania, as well as Pemba and Zanzibar; and I am really looking forward to visiting the north of the country later this year.

Sabina Hekandjo

Namibia



I grew up in Namibia, where most of my family still live, and I remember spending my weekends camping in the wilderness. After moving to Cape

Town to study travel and tourism, I then joined a top safari company in Windhoek. In 2005 the chance arose to move to London and join *Expert Africa* and I seized it. I still focus on sending travellers to my homeland!

Chloe Henderson

Botswana



Growing up in rural Australia, wide-open spaces and wilderness have always been my favourite travel destinations. I worked and travelled in various

parts of the world before joining *Expert Africa* in early 2013. Africa has always been an enduring interest of mine and so I've loved the chance to explore Botswana in detail on a succession of trips, and to share what I've learned!

Nick Hobbs

Botswana & Zimbabwe



Having grown up in South Africa, I've always had an interest in the region's wildlife and its wilderness areas. After studying zoology at university I worked for a while

in the Okavango Delta where I spent a month in a remote concession studying for my FGASA Guiding Qualification. I then returned to the UK to do a masters in sustainability before joining *Expert Africa* in 2010.

Megan Ingoldby

Botswana & Zambia



I grew up in South Africa and at a young age I fell in love with travel. There, 15 years ago, my first job with a great safari company ignited my enthusiasm for

wildlife and safaris. I joined *Expert Africa* in early 2011 and have relished gaining a much deeper understanding of a few African countries to add to the wide knowledge I already had of many. I feel very fortunate that I love what I'm doing.

Tracy Lederer

Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Mozambique & Botswana



My love of Africa began with a trip backpacking around Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi (and Mozambique briefly) in 1993. After teaching for many years, and exploring

other continents on extended trips, my passion for travel inspired me to switch careers, joining *Expert Africa* in 2004. Since then I have been lucky enough to travel extensively in Southern and East Africa.

Claire Scott

Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Malawi & Zimbabwe



I grew up in Cape Town and travelled extensively within South Africa before coming to the UK in 1990. I then worked for various African tour operators in London before

starting at 'Sunvil Africa', as it was then known, in 2001. I've been here ever since, travelling extensively and often, to virtually all of our destinations – most recently to Malawi and South Africa. It's in my blood!

Freddie Sutton

Zambia

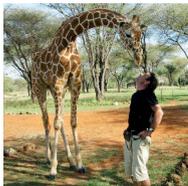


I have always had a passion for wildlife and travel, and Africa is the perfect continent to combine these two interests. After reading zoology at university, I assisted

on research into integrating tourism and conservation in Africa, before joining *Expert Africa* in 2014. I am working hard on becoming an expert on both Zambia and its wildlife, and supporting sustainable travel in the area.

Richard Trillo

Kenya



I first went to Kenya in 1981 and cycled all over the country. Then I went back to write the first guidebook – *The Rough Guide to Kenya*, now in its 10th edition – and

I've been back countless times since. A confirmed Kenya travel addict, I joined *Expert Africa* in 2012 to set up our Kenya programme. There's nothing more rewarding than passing on my enthusiasm for exploring this incredible country.

Elizabeth Wollen

Tanzania, Rwanda, Zanzibar & Congo



After a degree in economics, and a stint in the world of finance, I decided to swap the city life for something more exciting. A pre-university overland tour around eastern

and southern Africa whet my appetite and I joined the *Expert Africa* team in 2009. The last 5 years have included trekking gorillas in Rwanda and the Congo, climbing Kilimanjaro, and fishing for Nile Perch – I haven't looked back since!

Martha Young

Namibia



Born and raised in London, my first taste of Africa was moving to rural Uganda for a year after school. I've since been lucky enough to work in Kenya and South

Africa, and explore some of Mozambique, Rwanda and Namibia. Straight from university I joined *Expert Africa* in early 2014, specialising in Namibia, and am looking forward to my next research trip there, early in 2015.

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