Botswana and Zimbabwe offer some of the best safari experiences on the African continent. While Botswana boasts one of Africa’s most stable democratic governments and most well-known safari destinations, Zimbabwe has overcome past political issues and is coming back strong, with its national parks better than ever.

In Zimbabwe’s remote and extensive Hwange National Park, a myriad of bird and other wildlife awaits. Watch a large herd of elephant drink from a waterhole as the spectacular sunset plays out behind them, and then embark on a night game drive in search of nocturnal species, including the elusive leopard. In Zimbabwe’s northwest corner, the mighty Zambezi River forms the border with Zambia. Here one can enjoy the majesty of the river and view Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World.

Continue on to Botswana’s Linyanti Reserve, a vast, private reserve which not only hosts over one-third of the world’s population of elephants, but also supports strong populations of lion, leopard, cheetah, wild dog, buffalo, and many other species.

SCHEDULE BY DAY
B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

TUESDAY, MAY 19
DEPART FROM THE U.S.
Depart the U.S. on an independent, overnight flight to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20
VICTORIA FALLS
Upon an early afternoon arrival in Victoria Falls, you are met and transferred to the beautiful Victoria Falls Hotel, an historic landmark in the town of Victoria Falls. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure to relax and enjoy the lovely landscaped gardens and swimming pool. At sundown, meet your fellow travelers and private specialist guide for welcome drinks on the
terrace overlooking the Batoka Gorge—with the mist from Victoria Falls rising in the background—followed by dinner in one of the lodge's beautiful restaurants.

The Victoria Falls Hotel, a beautiful example of typical colonial design, is an African landmark. Established in 1904, the hotel is one of the last great colonial hotels of Africa—even the corridors reflect the past glories of the Empire. It is set in Victoria Falls National Park with a private path to the falls.

Overnight: Victoria Falls Hotel / (D)

THURSDAY, MAY 21
VICTORIA FALLS

This morning drive to Mpisi Village, a nearby traditional village. Here you meet the headman, Mr. Mpisi (“mpisi” means “hyena” in the local language), a highly respected chief and traditional healer, as well as an authority on the history of his people, the Matabele. As guests in his traditional home, learn from Mr. Mpisi of the fascinating history of this proud nation from their origins in Zululand, South Africa to present day Zimbabwe. After the discussion you may explore this setting, which has remained largely unchanged for generations.

After lunch at the hotel you are joined by a noted local historian who tells the tale of David Livingstone’s life, explorations, and “discovery” of the falls.

Then it is time to explore the magnificent falls themselves. One of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, Victoria Falls is where the Zambezi River opens out into an extravaganza of roaring, spray-tumbled water, known to the locals as “Mosi oa Tunya” (the smoke that thunders). Few sights are as awe-inspiring as this when the ground rumbles with the forces of the water.

Overnight: Victoria Falls Hotel / (B, L, D)

FRIDAY-MONDAY, MAY 22-25
HWANGE NATIONAL PARK

Following breakfast, drive south to Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe’s premier safari destination, and Davison’s Camp. The camp lies deep in Hwange, in the south-eastern Linkwasha Concession, one of the best game viewing areas of the entire park. Game viewing is productive year-round in the Linkwasha Concession; wildlife frequently encountered here include lion, large herds of elephant, buffalo, leopard, white rhino, spotted hyena, southern giraffe, sable, blue wildebeest, impala, common waterbuck, and reedbuck. There are a number of large, open plains areas in the concession which make for excellent game viewing. Bird life is prolific (more than 400 species) and varied, with species that frequent the teak woodlands as well as those typical of the drier Kalahari being present.

Davison’s Camp is a classic African tented camp, with the tents tastefully hidden beneath a grove of false mopane trees, overlooking a waterhole and open plain. Named after the founder of Hwange National Park and its first warden, Ted Davison, this camp offers a wonderful bush experience, overlooking a frequently-visited waterhole.

Activities at Davison’s Camp include game drives in open 4x4 vehicles and guided walks in the early mornings, while during the siesta hours you can view wildlife coming down to the waterhole to drink.

Overnight: Davison’s Camp / (B, L, D)

TUESDAY-THURSDAY, MAY 26-28
LINYANTI RESERVE

On the morning of May 26, watch for more game on your transfer to the local airstrip, where you board a scheduled charter flight back to Victoria Falls. Once you clear Zimbabwe customs for departure, take a short flight to Kasane, your gateway into beautiful Botswana. From Kasane, another flight takes you into the Linyanti Wildlife
Reserve. The Linyanti is a vast, private concession in the northern part of Botswana, on the western boundary of Chobe National Park. The luxurious Duma Tau Camp is situated in a prime location along the Linyanti River and within the Linyanti Wildlife Reserve. The reserve, which consists of over 300,000 acres of prime wildlife countryside, is bordered to the north by the Linyanti River and to the east by the Chobe National Park—with two-thirds of the Savuti Channel situated within. Due to this fabulous placement, Duma Tau offers an exclusive river and land experience.

Elephant are one of the area’s biggest attractions, as the camp is placed between two elephant corridors. Other wildlife in the area include hippo, red lechwe, zebra, wildebeest, buffalo, impala, waterbuck, sable, and roan. Then there are the predators: lion, leopard, cheetah, wild dog, and hyena, as well as many nocturnal animals.

Duma Tau offers boating, day and night game and nature drives along the Linyanti and Savuti Rivers, as well as short nature walks. The camp’s pontoon boat allows you access to the waterways to observe the hippos at close range. There are also a number of hides in the area which give you the opportunity to observe and photograph animals close-up in their natural environment without disturbance.

Accommodations consist of 10 luxurious new tents which are all raised off the ground to overlook the beautiful Osprey Lagoon, a prime spot to view wildlife. You can look out the wrap-around windows onto 360-degree views of the river and grasslands. Each spacious tent includes ensuite facilities with hot and cold running water, flush toilets and shower. The main camp area includes a dining room, pub, lounge and a plunge pool, all run completely from solar power and built to minimize its environmental impact.

Overnight: Duma Tau Camp / (B, L, D)

FRIDAY, MAY 29
DEPARTURE

After one last game viewing activity in the Linyanti, you board a charter flight to Maun. In Maun, connect to South African Air flight #8301 to Johannesburg, departing at 2:00pm. Upon arrival in Johannesburg at 3:40pm, connect to your international flight home.

SATURDAY, MAY 30
ARRIVE HOME