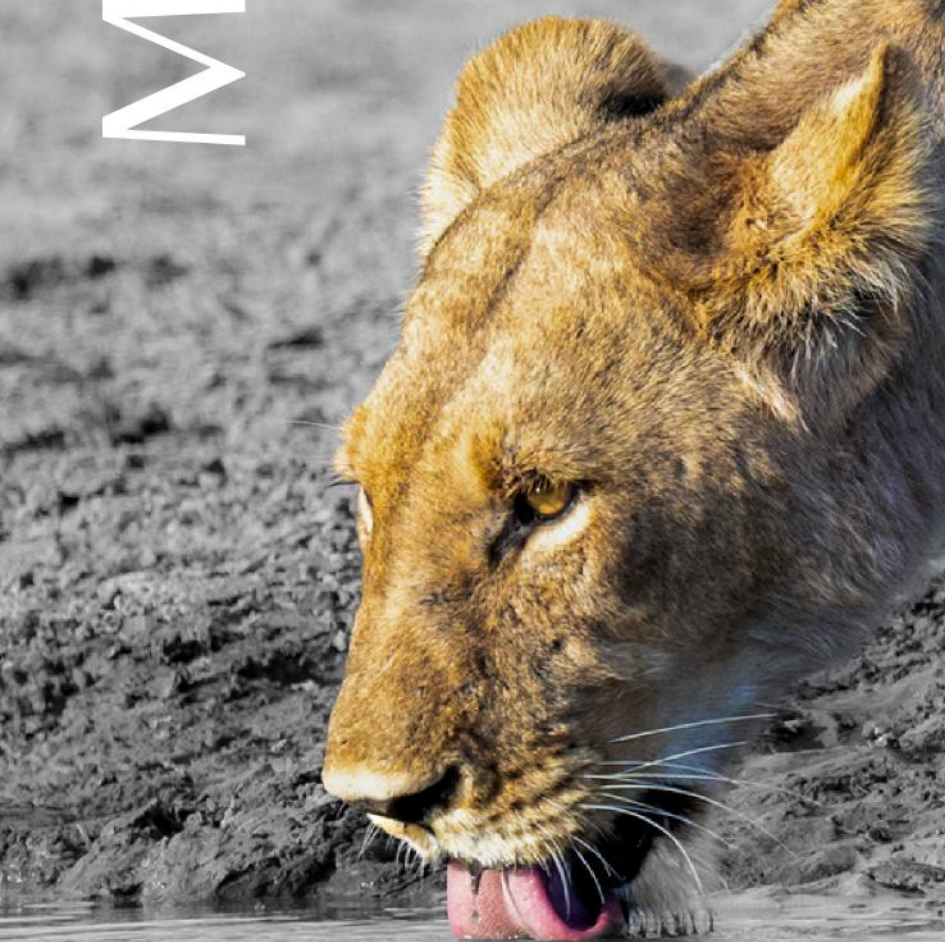


MAUYA



WELCOME TO ZIMBABWE

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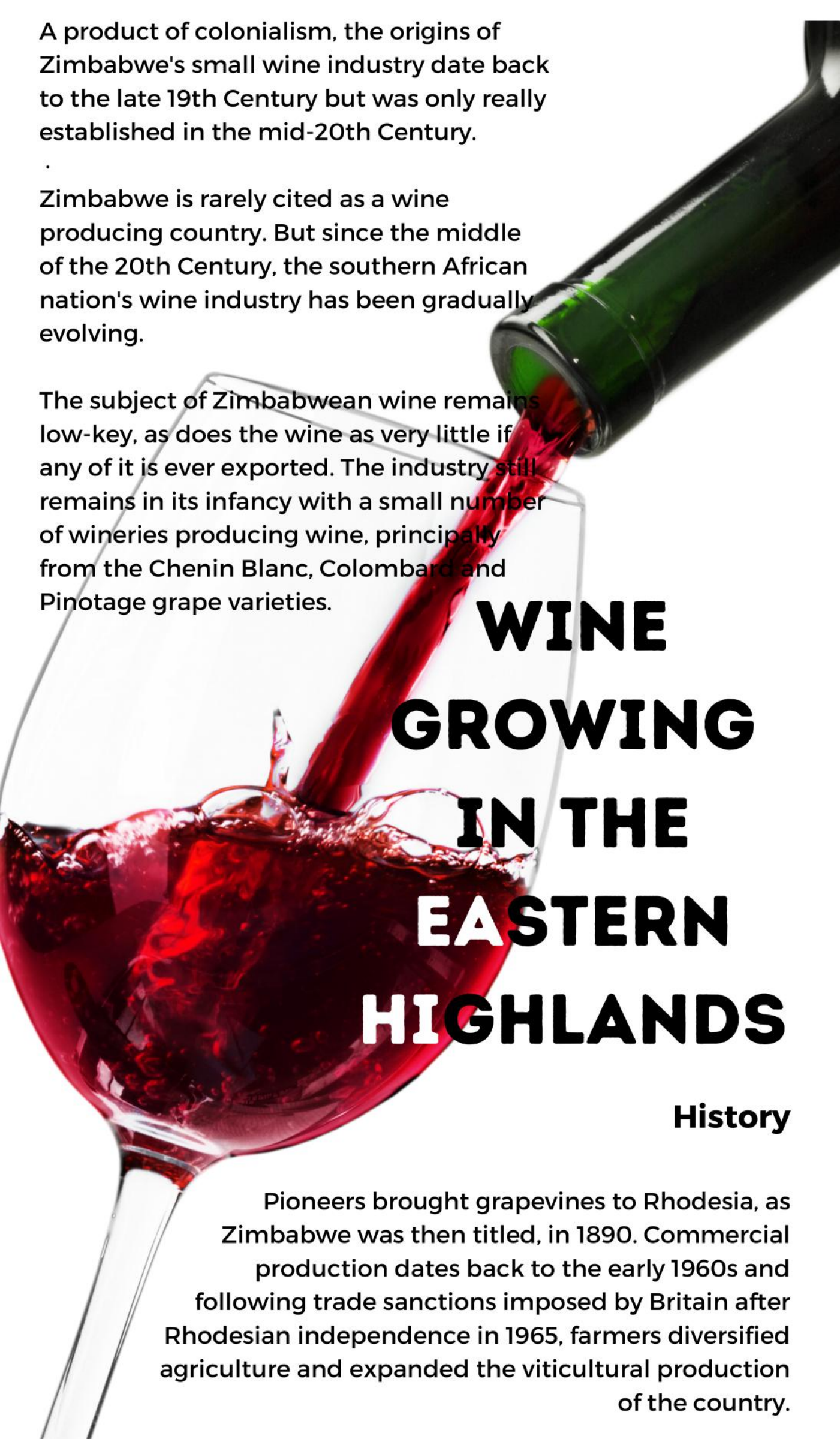
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A product of colonialism, the origins of Zimbabwe's small wine industry date back to the late 19th Century but was only really established in the mid-20th Century.

Zimbabwe is rarely cited as a wine producing country. But since the middle of the 20th Century, the southern African nation's wine industry has been gradually evolving.

The subject of Zimbabwean wine remains low-key, as does the wine as very little if any of it is ever exported. The industry still remains in its infancy with a small number of wineries producing wine, principally from the Chenin Blanc, Colombard and Pinotage grape varieties.



WINE GROWING IN THE EASTERN HIGHLANDS

History

Pioneers brought grapevines to Rhodesia, as Zimbabwe was then titled, in 1890. Commercial production dates back to the early 1960s and following trade sanctions imposed by Britain after Rhodesian independence in 1965, farmers diversified agriculture and expanded the viticultural production of the country.

From the mid-1960s, the Eastern Districts, Hippo Valley, Marandellas (Marondera) and Mazoe (Mazowe) Valley were found scattered with viticulture. However, since the mid-1980's due to a myriad of reasons including land reform and political unrest, viticulture has steadily declined in Zimbabwe to remain on the shoulders of just a few staunch vignerons.

Production

Despite its short history, Zimbabwe's wine culture progressed as far as establishing a basic appellation system with seven designated wine-appellation regions, although there are few wine production laws to complement these. It is standard procedure to employ foreign "flying winemakers" here, particularly those from neighboring South Africa.

It was the introduction of this practice that led to the most significant forward steps in the quality of Zimbabwe's wine. Upon independence in 1980, the wine industry was composed of three producers: African Distillers, Cairns Wineries and Meadows Estate.

Today, Bushman Rock Winery claim to be the only boutique winery in the country.



Climate

In the tropical climate of Sub-Saharan Africa, altitude is the most practical antidote to temperature and humidity. In fact, most of the nation's better viticultural areas are to be found in the relatively cool highlands.

The climate type of a combination of humid sub-tropical and oceanic, means heavy summer rains, the majority of which fall in February, when most other southern hemisphere wine regions are just preparing for harvest.

This elevated humidity creates the need for intensive spraying to prevent mildew diseases, and growth regulators are used to control budding and flowering as in these warm climates the vine has no dormant period and will produce several (low-quality) crops a year.

The average annual temperature is an impressive 19.5°C (67 °F), and frost can be a problem in some higher areas, particularly in July and August.

Grape varieties

To counter the effects of high humidity and consistently high temperatures, acidification is common in Zimbabwean wineries. Even so, off-dry wine styles are prevalent here, mostly white wines made from the aforementioned varieties as well as Cape Riesling (Crouchen).

Red wines are typically round, soft styles based on Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah. South Africa's flagship Pinotage variety features heavily in both locally produced wines and imported varieties.

Blind Ambition

The 2022 wine movie *Blind Ambition* told the story of four Zimbabwean sommeliers' journey to France to represent their country at the World Wine Tasting Championships.



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A wide-angle photograph of Victoria Falls, showing the Zambezi River cascading over a series of dark, rocky ledges. The water is white and frothy as it falls. In the upper left, several people are visible sitting on the rocky edge of the falls. The background shows a line of tall palm trees under a clear sky. The foreground is filled with green grass and some dry branches.

HOW SAFE IS TAKING A PLUNGE INTO VICTORIA FALLS' DEVIL'S POOL?

Have you ever wanted to sit on the edge of a waterfall? Well you can do that Devil's Pool in Zambia, but is it safe? Find out here.

Leah Jones

Devil's Pool is a natural rock pool located on the edge of Victoria Falls, along the Zambezi River bordering Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is one of the most famous waterfalls in the world and an exhilarating attraction for adventurous visitors seeking a unique experience at the falls.

Devil's Pool is one of the highlights of Victoria Falls, as it allows visitors to witness a breathtaking view you cannot safely see pretty much anywhere else in the world. However, the excursion is not without its risks and is definitely not for the faint of heart. Here is everything you need to know about taking the plunge in Devil's Pool, from how safe it is to what the experience is like.

WHAT IS DEVIL'S POOL

Devil's Pool is formed by a natural rock wall that blocks off a portion of the falls, allowing visitors to swim right up to the edge of the precipice during the dry season when water levels are lower. The pool sits at the very edge of Victoria Falls, with incredible views of the powerful waterfall known as "The Smoke That Thunders." However, swimming in the pool is only safely possible during the dry season (mid-August to mid-December).

Devil's Pool is a popular thrill-seeking and photography destination for adventure travelers visiting Victoria Falls. It provides an adrenaline-pumping experience of being right on the knife's edge of one of the world's largest waterfalls.

HOW TO GET TO DEVIL'S POOL

To access Devil's Pool, visitors must take a guided hike and swim across a channel through Green Safaris' guided tours. One official tour available is called The Livingstone Island tour. The Livingstone Island tour is still worth it for those who want to see this natural wonder but are not necessarily willing to take the plunge, as Devil's Pool is only one part of the experience. The tour often begins with a boat transfer from the mainland to Livingstone Island. Visitors embark on a short boat ride, enjoying scenic views of the Zambezi River and the surrounding landscape. Upon reaching Livingstone Island, participants have the opportunity to explore the island and learn about its history. Livingstone Island is named after the famous Scottish explorer Dr. David Livingstone, who was the first European to see Victoria Falls.





One of the highlights of the tour is the chance to visit Devil's Pool. During the dry season when the water levels are lower (the driest months are typically October and November), a natural rock barrier creates a lip just before the waterfall's edge. Visitors can swim to the pool, guided by experienced staff, and enjoy the thrilling experience of being right on the brink of Victoria Falls. After the thrill of Devil's Pool, the tour heads back to Livingstone Island where breakfast, lunch, or snacks are given depending on what time your tour is. Visitors are taken back to the mainland by boat After the adventure on Livingstone Island and Devil's Pool.

IS DEVIL'S POOL SAFE?

One of the highlights of the tour is the chance to visit Devil's Pool. During the dry season when the water levels are lower (the driest months are typically October and November), a natural rock barrier creates a lip just before the waterfall's edge. Visitors can swim to the pool, guided by experienced staff, and enjoy the thrilling experience of being right on the brink of Victoria Falls. After the thrill of Devil's Pool, the tour heads back to Livingstone Island where breakfast, lunch, or snacks are given depending on what time your tour is. Visitors are taken back to the mainland by boat After the adventure on Livingstone Island and Devil's Pool.

Making a trek to a naturally formed infinity pool right off the side of a waterfall is bound to be scary and not completely, 100% safe. That is what makes it so thrilling to many people. However, the main risk of falling off the edge of Devil's Pool that most are concerned with is highly unlikely.

John Widmer for the blog "Roaming Around The World" shared his experience with the Livingstone Island tour. He wrote, "In Devil's Pool itself, there is a rock lip that protrudes upward which keeps you from falling over the edge. Under the low water conditions that you're permitted to enter Devil's Pool, you would have to make a concerted effort to actually go up and over that rock that's naturally keeping you in."

You would have to make an effort to actually fall over the lip of Devil's Pool. Additionally, there have been no deaths at Devil's Pool in Victoria Falls. A commonly known death of a guide attempting to rescue a tourist and falling to his death did unfortunately happen but it was not at Devil's Pool and was before the Green Safaris' guided tours were the only way to access the pool. Minor injuries from slipping on rocks are possible.

Additionally, strong swimming skills and being in very fit shape are not required for the Livingstone Island tour. According to Victoria Falls Guide, "You swim slightly upstream in a very slow current, being a strong swimmer is not a prerequisite. A safety rope is also in place as an added precaution."

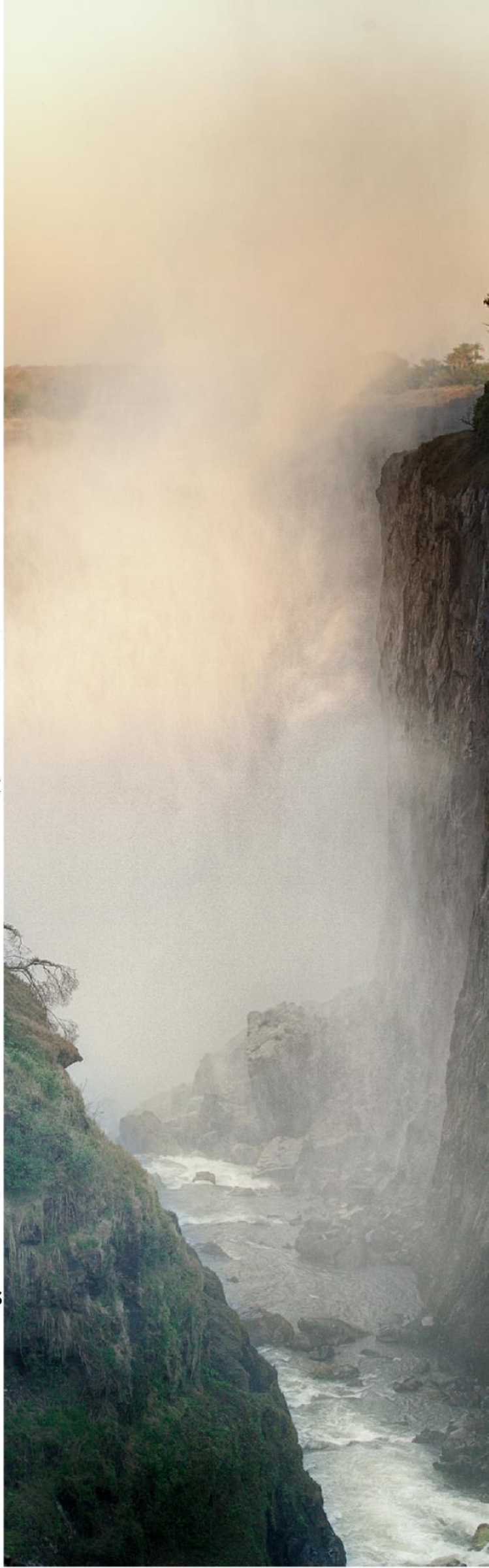


Widmer also wrote that people of varying body sizes, ages, and swimming skills were able to make it across the Zambezi River without any incidents. Up until Devil's Pool, the water should be shallow enough to stand in, but guides are always there for assistance.

The excursion is only permitted when conditions are the safest and it is permitted. Crocodiles and hippos call this river home, so there is a chance to encounter them. However, guides always look out for these creatures and they know to stray away from the Victoria Falls' edge at Devil's Pool.

HOW MUCH DOES THE LIVINGSTONE ISLAND TOUR COST?

There are multiple trips available to take with the Livingstone Island tour. There are multiple morning tours that last about 1.5 hours at the price of about \$110 per person. Then there is a lunch slot that lasts about 2.5 hours for about \$175 per person. Lastly, there is the high tea trip that lasts about 2 hours and costs \$150 per person. Book a tour through a reputable travel agency, hotel, or booking site.



Those ages eight and up are able to take the Livingstone Island tour. However, children must be 12 and up to go into Devil's Pool.

SHOULD YOU VISIT DEVIL'S POOL?

While Devil's Pool offers a unique perspective of Victoria Falls, it's essential for visitors to be aware of their own comfort levels with heights and water-based activities and to prioritize safety at all times. Keep in mind that conditions may change, and access to Devil's Pool is dependent on the water levels and weather conditions at Victoria Falls.

You can still take the Livingstone Island tour without taking the plunge into Devil's Pool. Those who are iffy on Devil's Pool but do not want to miss out on the sights can simply skip that part of the tour. You are free to change your mind in any way once on the tour.



Cody
The Rank Marshal

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Sounds like a story familiar to those who know Jungle Book. But in this case he comes from a good home in Zimbabwe. He loved to play with all the children who lived on the property where he grew up. As a result, he learnt to speak Shona fluently, even with the right accent, volume and walk that left his family wondering where on earth he came from. But Cody had dreams of stardom!

The White Shona Boy!

I managed to get hold of his mom who still lives in Zim (fondly known by us all as Zimbo). She misses him madly. But she shared some interesting "mom" stories with SA Commuter.

"Cody is the youngest of 3 children.

He grew up in a small holding 20 kilometres outside Harare in Zimbabwe in a place called Christon Bank."

"He grew up playing with our domestic helpers children who spoke to him in Shona from the time he was very little, and he spoke to them in English". She laughs as she remembers the communication between them. "To this day none of know how they understood each other! But in the language of children, they did. To this day Cody remains good friends with his childhood friend and in fact when Cody goes to do his shows as AKA Rank Marshall,

Energy goes as his security". His mom shares that when Cody was in junior school, he won the prize for the Shona. At school it is known as Language 1 for the locals and Language 2 for those who speak English as a home language.

Cody was in Language 1 despite speaking English at home (we would have been completely lost had he not been able to converse in both languages). At prize giving we were sitting next to another child's parents and they said "oh there is an error in the program - a boy who doesn't have a Shona surname, is getting the prize! His mom roared with laughters as she shared that it was indeed her son and he really did speak fluent Shona.

Cody The Rank Marshall shares his life story with V Candy on Candid with Candy #podcast #zimcomedy

Cody's journey as Rank Marshall started when he stood on the back of an ET Commuter bus shouting instructions in Shona. The video went viral .

In 2020 he received an award for having the most followers on Social Media and being the biggest Influencer in Zimbabwe. 30 people under 30 are awarded the prize.



MARTHA TERRY

ALL ABOUT THE RHODESIAN RIDGEBACK



The statuesque Rhodesian Ridgeback was originally developed as a scent hound in South Africa to track a variety of game. When this hound breed was taken to Rhodesia – now called Zimbabwe – several hundred years ago, it was used largely for tracking lions, fast on the scent, athletic in tracking and courageous in holding the lions at bay until the hunters arrived (the dogs did not kill the lions). It was previously known as the African Lion Hound.

They would also protect their owners, from other dangerous animals such as leopards, and could course other prey such as antelope to provide dinner for the hunting party. They were bred to be able to run alongside mounted hunters all day long under the hot African sun.

The Rhodesian Ridgeback is a result of crosses between the native ridged Khoikhoi dog and European breeds brought over by Dutch colonists. The local blood gave this new breed a natural resiliency against the tsetse fly (which can cause fatal disease) as well as its ability to cope with heat.

The breed's name derives from a ridge of hair growing in the reverse direction along its spine. According to canine folklore surrounding the Khoikhoi dog, a well-defined ridge was a sign of courage. Another distinctive feature is their colour, which comes in all shades of wheaten, from light golds to rich reds.

Rhodesian ridgeback showing the characteristic ridge

The ridge of hair growing in a contrasting direction along the spine is clearly visible. It was said to denote courage





Rhodesian Ridgeback dog breed: fact file

- Kennel Club breed group: hound
- Size: large
- Daily exercise: more than two hours
- Coat: short, shedding
- Colours: wheaten, light wheaten and red wheaten. Eyes harmonise with coat colour.
- Lifespan: more than 10 years
- Bark: rarely barks

History: previously known as the African Lion Hound, this scent hound was bred to track big game in South Africa and Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia). The breed was developed from local Khoikhoi dogs crossed with European breeds such as greyhounds, mastiffs, bloodhounds and terriers.

Distinctive features: the defined ridge along the back where the hair grows in the opposite direction to the rest of the coat. Their overall appearance is handsome, strong and muscular. Athletically built for endurance, but also speed.



Temperament: dignified, intelligent and aloof, yet confident. Neither aggressive nor shy.

Things to consider: the Ridgeback is a statuesque and imposing dog at full size, and should accordingly be fed one of the best puppy foods for large breeds to allow it to develop correctly. It will also benefit from one of the best large dog beds to give him ample space to stretch and snooze. They have high exercise needs, so be prepared to give them plenty of regular, vigorous exercise to keep them happy and healthy.

Training: Rhodesian Ridgebacks have a very strong prey drive, so should be trained in a safely enclosed area when off leash. They can be strong-willed and independent, but thrive on a challenge and are loyal and devoted companions. They are intelligent and enjoy working alongside their owner, for instance in tracking and agility sports.





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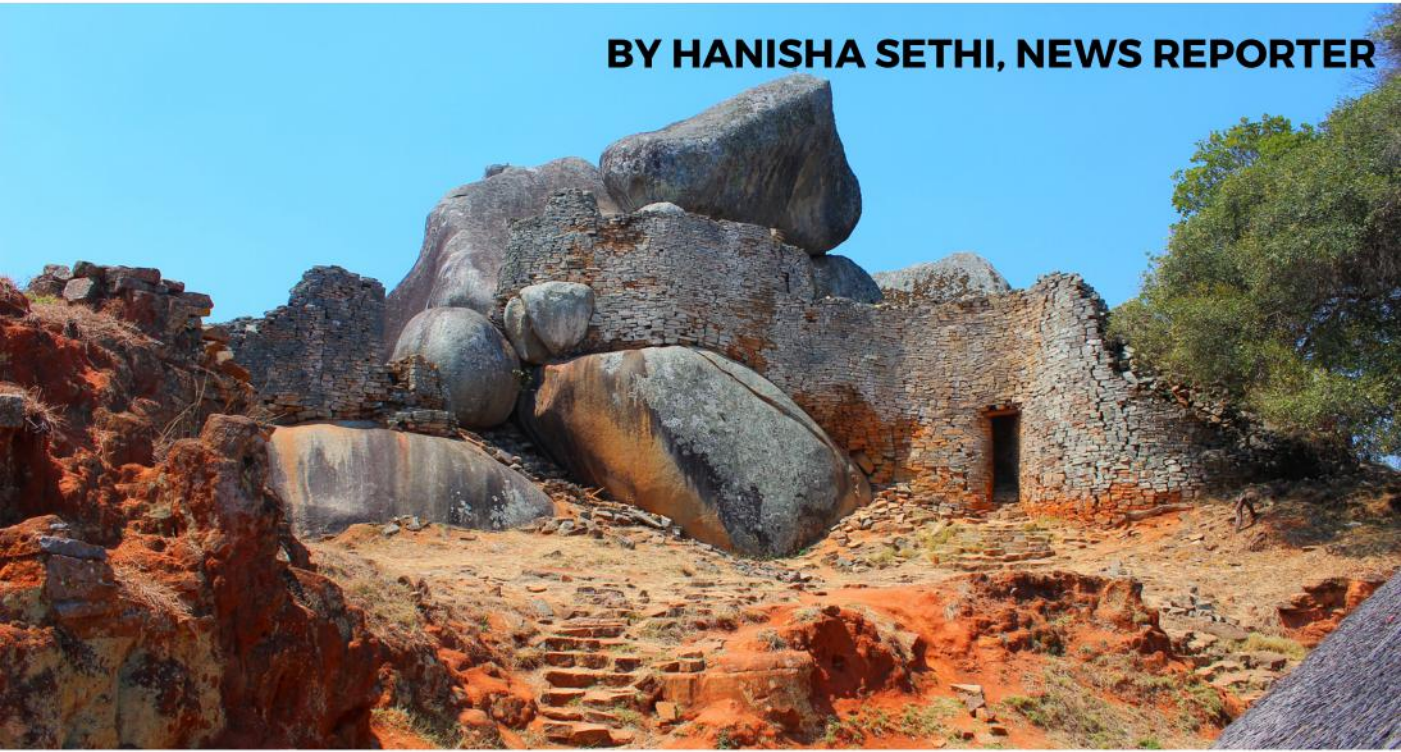
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THE ABANDONED CITY THAT WAS ONCE A THRIVING EPICENTRE FOR ANCIENT HISTORY

Great Zimbabwe was once a medieval city part of a wealthy African trading empire before it was abandoned in the 15th century.

BY HANISHA SETHI, NEWS REPORTER



The ancient city, Great Zimbabwe, in Zimbabwe, Africa, was once part of a large and wealthy global trading network and boasted a population between 10,000 to 20,000.

It was largely abandoned by the 15th century as the Shona people migrated, but the exact reasons for abandonment are unknown. Exhaustion of resources and overpopulation of the area were likely contributing factors, according to National Geographic.



The site itself consists of a series of structural ruins that sit on a steep hill, one of which is named the Great Enclosure, which is a walled, circular area.

The wall is over 9.7 metres high in places and was built relying on carefully shaped rocks to hold the wall's shape.

While the function of the enclosure is known, it could have been a royal residence or a grain storage facility, but it is one of the largest existing structures from ancient sub-Saharan Africa.





Great Zimbabwe was constructed between the 11th and 14th centuries over 722 hectares in the southern part of modern Zimbabwe.

Unfortunately, significant looting occurred in the 20th century at the hands of European visitors. In their racism, European colonists thought the city was too sophisticated to have been built by Africans, and instead thought it had been built by Phoenicians or other non-African people, according to National Geographic.

In 1905, however, the British archaeologist David Randall-Maclver concluded the ruins were medieval, and built by one or more of the local African Bantu peoples.

His findings were also confirmed by another British archaeologist, Gertrude Caton-Thompson, in 1929, and this remains the consensus today.

The prosperity of the city came from its location. Its position between the gold-producing regions of the area and ports on the Mozambique coast - over time it became the heart of an extensive commercial and trading network.

Main trading items were gold, ivory and copper, and imported items discovered in the ruins included glassware ranging from Syria, to assorted Persian and Chinese ceramics.



There is still a lot to uncover about the ancient capital city, Great Zimbabwe. The city's history is derived from archaeological evidence found on the site, as well as the oral history of the local Shona-speaking people, particularly regarding spiritual beliefs and building traditions.

Designated a Unesco World Heritage Site in 1986, the preservation of Great Zimbabwe – led by the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe organisation – is now challenged by uncontrolled growth of vegetation, which threatens the stability of its dry stone walls.

The medieval city is situated in the south-eastern hills of the modern country of Zimbabwe, near Lake Mutirikwe and the town of Masvingo.



What's happening in Zimbabwe's property market may surprise you

Commercial property professional Kura Chihota from eXp South Africa is the guest on Moneyweb's milestone 100th episode of The Property Pod, which goes regional this week, as we look at what's bubbling in the Zimbabwe and broader SADC real estate markets.



COMMERCIAL OFFICE BUILDINGS IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT OF HARARE, ZIMBABWE'S CAPITAL.
IMAGE: BLOOMBERG

You can also listen to this podcast on iono.fm here.

Welcome to The Property Pod, South Africa's premier property investor podcast. It's our milestone 100th episode, and on this weekly show we gain insider insights from leading executives, analysts, developers and entrepreneurs in South Africa's expansive property industry.

On this week's podcast, we are going regional and speaking to a commercial property professional who has worked in Zimbabwe, his home country, as well as in South Africa, and a number of SADC [Southern African Development Community] countries over the years.

He is Kura Chihota, who has some 30 years of experience in the real estate sector, both on the listed and unlisted sides. Currently he's regional property consultant at eXp South Africa.

Highlights of his interview appear below. You can also listen to the full podcast above or download it from iONO, Spotify or Apple Podcasts.

Highlights

Since Zimbabwe is where you are from, can you share some insights on that market broadly? I know it's a very broad question, but it seems there's a bit happening there, despite Zimbabwe's well-reported economic challenges.

"Let's go a little bit back into history. You say I've been in the game a while. It makes me feel an old man to say that I've been doing it for 30 years, but be that as it may.

"Zimbabwe, as most people observing from outside would know and remember, has gone through crazy hyperinflation. We get laughed at for numbers with 27 zeros. So you imagine in an economy where you have financial assets, the likes of Old Mutual and other pension funds, names there that you'd recognise, if you had financial assets – your retirement annuity or your pension fund – invested in those, when the Zimbabwe dollar version 1.0 blew out, you had nothing.

"So against that backdrop, if you had a title deed and you had real estate; you had an invested funded position – if you had bought it on a mortgage, now that mortgage has evaporated and you're left with a cold, hard capital asset."

“And that’s been increasingly valuable because it now trades exclusively in US dollars – we now have a market that circulates US dollars amongst itself – so what you get for US\$100 000 in Zim can’t be compared to what goes for R1.8 million down here in South Africa.

“We’ve seen that real estate – because of its hard nature, its enduring nature, and its ability to attract US dollars – has caused capital to flow to it, and our professional property managers, pension funds, provident funds, insurance companies – 55% of their value is actually stored in real estate. So that gives us an over-concentration in the asset class.

“Some people wonder if it’s a bubble, but I think it’s a natural reaction to the only asset class that has endured at this time through these economic circumstances. And for love of money, no one is going to let go of that asset in anything but US dollars.



”

How much is actually going in there? You are talking more from a Zimbabwean perspective, but Zimbabwe still is a well-known tourist destination. In fact, close to Victoria Falls there's a secondary stock exchange planned – if not already having commenced trading. Who are investing in the property market? Are they mainly Zimbabweans?

“It [the stock exchange] is up and running ...

“At this stage it's mainly Zimbabweans. We do have interest from outside parties, be it Chinese, be it some money out of Eastern Europe. But the money that's moving within the country is Zimbabwean dollars because, as I said, you bought an asset in Zimbabwean dollars with debt, and that debt evaporated away. Now you've just got US dollars, and US dollar trading. So people are moving it from one pocket to another.



PROOF ELEPHANTS ARE SMARTER AND FUNNIER THAN MOST HUMANS I KNOW (SORRY, HUMANS!)

JENNIFER SANDLIN

Here's proof that elephants are smarter—and more clever—than most run-of-the-mill humans. Watch this funny elephant named Mak, who lives at the Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservancy in Wedza, Zimbabwe, playing around with a tourist who was posing for a photo with him. He gently takes her hat from her head with his trunk, pretends to eat it, and then hides it in his mouth. When the woman asks for her hat back, he makes it magically appear again and hands it back to her, much to her delight.

While this video is a few years old, Mak still lives at the Conservancy and is still delighting tourists and staff alike. In fact, one of his caretakers posted a video of Mak today, with the comment: "Not a moment goes by when I am not in awe of our Mak— what a privilege to have spent my life around such a majestic animal—we can learn a lot from creatures like this!"

The Conservancy describes its work and mission on its website:



Imire is dedicated to protecting wildlife and strongly believe that rural communities and conservation programmes can successfully thrive side by side, working together to ensure the protection of our natural heritage. Our vision at Imire is to enhance the relationships between tourism, conservation programmes and community areas through long-term, sustainable environmental management and positive community projects.

Imire creates awareness internationally of the wildlife and poaching crisis which threatens Zimbabwe and Africa, and the obstacles faced by local communities and conservation organisations. The biggest threats to the animals protected at Imire, and regionally are poaching and human overpopulation. Poaching is driven by demand for ivory and rhino horn in foreign countries, and fueled by poverty and lack of education on the ground. To protect the rhino and all wildlife, we believe we need to empower local communities.

We help local and international guests and volunteers see what they can achieve with contributions of their time, ideas, financial assistance and enthusiasm. Imire's ultimate goal is to prove that our endangered species can be protected through a unified, holistic approach to conservation. We believe this is the key to the survival of all wildlife and ecosystems.

I've watched this short video of Mak and his hat trick so many times—I just can't get enough of this brilliant and playful pachyderm! I hope you enjoy it, too!



SOCIAL MEDIA; HOW ONLINE TRADE THREATENS CHEETAHS

BY SONA PREBHAKAR- MARCH 5, 2024

The internet, once hailed as a global connector, has become a dark marketplace for endangered species. This is especially worrisome for cheetahs, the world's fastest land animal. A new report by TRAFFIC, a wildlife trade monitoring network, reveals a disturbing trend: social media platforms are facilitating a thriving illegal trade in live cheetahs.

CHEETAHS ON THE BRINK: A SPECIES IN PERIL

Cheetahs are already facing an uphill battle for survival. With an estimated 6,500 adults remaining in the wild, their population has dwindled to a mere 9% of their historical range. Classified as "Vulnerable" on the IUCN Red List, cheetahs face numerous threats including habitat loss, conflict with humans, and limited genetic diversity.

THE ALARMING RISE OF ONLINE CHEETAH TRAFFICKING

The TRAFFIC report exposes the shocking extent of online cheetah trafficking. A staggering 70% of illegal cheetah trade now occurs on social media platforms. Researchers identified over 222 unique URLs within just six months, with nearly half openly advertising live cheetahs for sale.

This illicit activity primarily targets vulnerable cheetah cubs, separated from their mothers for the lucrative pet trade. The report also highlights concerning connections between cheetah trafficking and the trade of other exotic animals like big cats, reptiles, and primates.

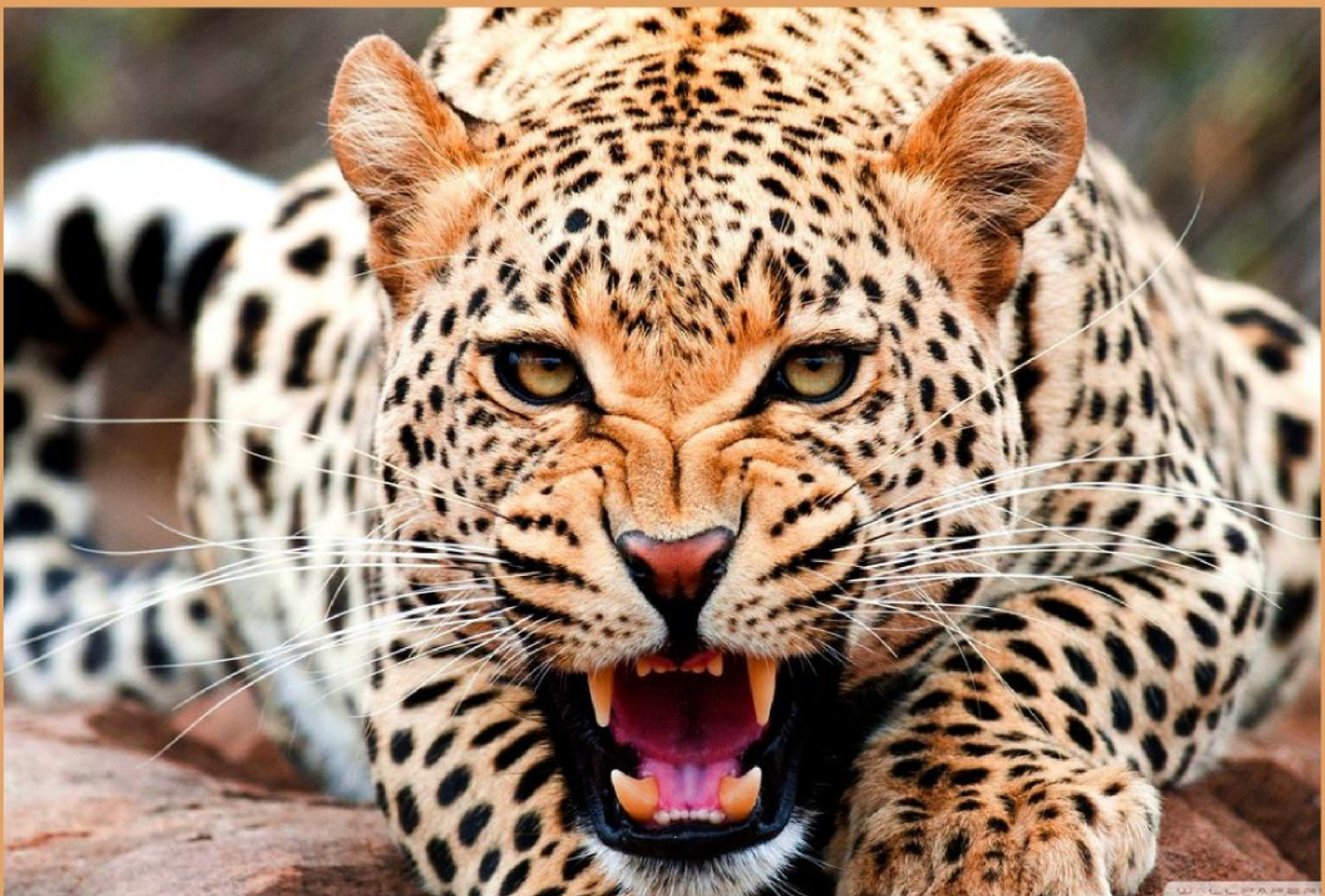
The report reveals a disturbing shift in tactics by online traffickers. To evade detection, they create multiple user profiles, utilize enhanced privacy settings, and avoid using explicit "transactional" language. Instead, they rely on photos and cryptic messages to attract potential buyers.



COMPOUNDING THE THREAT: A MULTI-FACETED CRISIS

The online trade in cheetahs exacerbates existing threats to the species. Habitat loss continues to fragment cheetah populations, while human-wildlife conflict disrupts their natural behaviour. Furthermore, low genetic diversity weakens the overall health and resilience of the cheetah population.

The online trade adds a chilling new dimension to this complex challenge. It offers a convenient platform for traffickers to exploit vulnerabilities within cheetah populations, potentially accelerating their decline.



WHY 76PC OF AFRICA'S ENERGY WILL COME FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES



Study shows countries such as Nigeria and Zimbabwe, have enough projects in the pipeline to potentially transition away from fossil fuels by 2050.

[iStockphoto]

Over half of Africa's people - about 600 million - lack access to even the bare minimum of electricity. The tough question is how access can be extended without adding to global warming by relying on fossil fuels.

A team from Rwanda and Germany who work in renewable energy scientific modelling - set out to find the answer by building the Renewable Power Plant Database Africa, the first on the continent. It's a database of available open-access data on hydro, wind and solar energy sources that we've analysed.



The database shows that some countries, such as Nigeria and Zimbabwe, have enough projects in the pipeline to potentially transition away from fossil fuels by 2050.

And that 76 per cent of all electricity required on the continent could come from renewable resources by 2040.


This would happen if the capacity of existing hydro, solar and wind power plants were fully utilised and if all plants currently on the drawing board were built.



The 76 per cent from renewables would be met by 82 per cent hydropower, 11 per cent solar power and seven per cent wind power.

Hydropower has been the main renewable energy resource to date, but declining costs for solar photovoltaics (90 per cent decline since 2009) and wind turbines (55 per cent–60 per cent decline since 2010) mean solar and wind have the potential to lead sustainable renewable energy options.

We conclude that combining the advantages of hydropower with wind and solar would be a more sustainable alternative to hydropower alone.

A stylized, glowing blue wind turbine is the central focus of the image. The turbine's tower, nacelle, and three blades are rendered in a semi-transparent, neon blue color, giving it a futuristic and high-tech appearance. The background is a deep, dark blue gradient, which makes the glowing turbine stand out prominently. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and emphasizes renewable energy technology.

And that hybrid solutions would be the best option. But none of this can happen unless countries are willing to get into transnational electricity-sharing arrangements. In addition, providing openly accessible and location-specific data is fundamental for the development of an integrated sustainable renewable energy mix.

We compiled the publicly available records of 1,074 hydropower, 1,128 solar and 276 wind power plants into one database. These were both existing and planned plants. We included the location of each proposed plant for all African countries.

We then integrated the data into a harmonised and updated database.

This is the first comprehensive overview of renewable energy plants in Africa that includes their geographic coordinates, construction status and capacity (in megawatts). This database shows that some countries have enough projects in the pipeline to potentially transition away from fossil fuels.

Hydropower is used by Eswatini, Angola, Djibouti, Gambia, Cameroon, Tanzania, Lesotho and the Democratic Republic of Congo as a major or main source of renewable electricity.

Other countries, including Egypt, South Africa, Algeria, Libya, Cape Verde, Morocco and Tunisia, are lagging in renewable energy development.

These countries are highly electrified and their economies depend strongly on fossil fuels. We found that hydropower could more than double to 132GW. This would happen if those plants that have already had feasibility studies carried out were built. The Aswan High Dam has an installed capacity of 2.1 gigawatts (GW) and generates most of Egypt's energy.

So 132GW would be enough to provide power for several countries.

However, hybrid solutions are more likely to provide reliable electricity to a growing population in a changing climate. The cost of wind and solar power is dropping while a recent analysis concluded that barely any hydropower will be profitable after 2030.

If hydropower is not a favourable option under future climate change scenarios, wind and solar will be able to step in. Hybrid power plants that generate a combination of renewable energy are another option. A promising example of this is the installation of floating solar panels on existing reservoirs.

To meet the demand across Africa, firstly, there is international electricity sharing between African countries. This is the only way to ensure a renewable electricity supply to all countries.

Secondly, African leaders must also move away from economic-driven development and integrate the different interests of people involved or affected, such as residents, the general population, and governmental and non-governmental organisations.



Thirdly, renewable energy development must include the interests of different people involved or affected by new energy projects, such as local communities and the general population.

In the past, the land-intensive expansion of renewable power plants has caused conflicts with farmers, national parks and industries.

Fourth, governments must share experiences across borders to avoid mistakes such as damming the Nile River for hydropower. The Aswan High Dam, for example, disturbs the transport of sediments down to the delta of the Nile, threatening the highly biodiverse wetlands and inducing shoreline erosion, putting humans at risk.

The Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, currently under construction, is a recent prominent example of the need for cooperation and river management across borders, especially when facing potential impacts of climate change like droughts on the efficiency of the hydropower plant.

Fifth, we call for a general rethink on how data is managed. All data should be shared and openly accessible across the world. Countries need to share high-quality data, including data about their power plants.

High-quality data is key to analysing the different routes that electricity development should take across the continent in future. Such projections are only as good as the knowledge and data they are based on.

African countries that follow this route will be global role models for a renewable energy transition.





Workers at Benard Chinyemba's 80-hectare Benchi Farm, acquired during Zimbabwe's land reform programme, in Glendale near Harare on March 4, 2020. (Photo by Jekesai NJIKIZANA / AFP)

EastFruit analysts draw attention to an unexpected fact – currently the world leader in the growth rate of blueberry exports is a country that is better known for its record breaking hyperinflation rates and poverty. However, this country was once very rich and had a highly developed agriculture, so its potential should not be underestimated.

According to EastFruit, there is currently an investment boom in blueberry farming in Zimbabwe. New plantations are established mainly by investors from neighboring South Africa, who often diversify or even move production to this country due to very favorable climatic conditions, availability of high-quality water for irrigation and inexpensive labor. In addition, recently there has been an increase in investments from other countries into development of new blueberry plantations in Zimbabwe.



Since blueberry production in Zimbabwe is developed mainly by investors who already have experience growing blueberries in similar climatic conditions, the productivity of the plantations and the quality of the products are quite high. Also, these companies already have established blueberry sales channels, which allows them to do the same with berries grown in Zimbabwe.

As a result, Zimbabwe's blueberry exports are currently growing faster than any other country in the world. "On average over the past five years, Zimbabwe has increased blueberry exports by 63% each year or by 1,200 tones. In 2022, exports grew by 85% or 2.3 thousand tons and exceeded 5 thousand tons, which allowed the country to enter the top 15 countries in blueberry exports and overtake Serbia in volume," says Andrij Yarmak, economist at the investment department of the Food and Agriculture Ministry. UN organizations (FAO).

EastFruit experts expect that in 2023, blueberry exports from Zimbabwe could grow by another 30-40% and reach 6.5-7.0 thousand tons. Considering the high price level for blueberries due to the poor harvest of this berry in Peru, the country can make good money from exporting blueberries in the new season.

Significant part of blueberries from Zimbabwe are exported to South Africa, apparently for further re-exports. The country also directly exports fresh blueberries to the UK, EU and Middle East countries, as well as to Russia.

By the way, Georgia is also among the leaders in the growth rate of blueberries in the world, with an average annual increase in exports of 50%. In 2023, blueberry exports from Georgia increased 2.5 times and reached 3.4 thousand tons. True, obviously, some of these blueberries were grown in Ukraine and re-exported by traders from Georgia to the Russian market.

Ukraine itself, despite its leading positions in the world in terms of the rate of blueberry area increase, is somewhat behind Georgia in terms of the growth rate of exports. However, in 2023, the blueberry exports from Ukraine increased sharply, which is partly due to a decrease in the local blueberry market size due to the outflow of population as a result of Russian military aggression.

ZIMBABWE LAUNCHES CHOLERA VACCINATION TO CURB THE SPREAD



Today, the Government of Zimbabwe launched a vaccination campaign against cholera, in collaboration with UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO). The first cholera vaccines were administered by the Health and Child Care Honorable Minister Dr Douglas Mombeshora during an event in Kuwadzana, one of the most affected areas of the current cholera outbreak, in the presence of Dr Tajudeen Oyewale, UNICEF Representative, and Professor Jean-Marie Dangou, WHO Country Representative. These vaccines were made possible thanks to the financial support from GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, whose commitment to global health equity has been instrumental in providing access to life-saving vaccines for Zimbabwe. The cholera vaccines are an additional strategy the Government is rolling out to contain the spread of cholera in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe has recorded more than 20,000 suspected cholera and more than 400 confirmed and suspected deaths, since the first cases were recorded nearly a year ago. A multisectoral cholera response plan led by the Ministry of Health and Child Care in collaboration with other Government Ministries and supported by UNICEF, WHO and partners and donors, has been rolled out focusing on streamlining response coordination at all levels, treatment of infected people and prevention of the spread of the disease through improved access to safe water, sanitation, personal and food hygiene and the dissemination of preventive messages to population most at risk.



The introduction of the cholera vaccine is another tool to prevent the further spread of the disease. The first three batches of 892,286 cholera vaccines arrived via air freight on January 25 and January 27 at Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport, from which they were immediately dispatched to be used in the most affected districts in the country. More arrivals are planned in the days to come.

The cholera vaccine used in Zimbabwe is the Euvichol-Plus vaccine, produced by EuBiologics. It is an oral vaccine administered by mouth. One dose of vaccine protects against cholera infections for a period of at least six months.

The cholera vaccination campaign in Zimbabwe is targeting 2.3 million people, aged one year old and above, living in 160 wards within 26 high risk districts in 7 provinces: Harare, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Manicaland, Masvingo and Midlands. These districts are considered the main drivers for the outbreak.

The main operational strategy used in this campaign is house-to-house to minimize gatherings and further spread of the disease. This is complemented by fixed vaccination points in all health facilities within the catchment area. Each vaccination team is composed of three people, expected to vaccinate an average of 150 persons per day. Ahead of the start of the vaccination, a comprehensive social mobilization campaign was rolled-out to sensitize the population and generate demand for the vaccine.

While the cholera vaccine provides additional protection against infections, it is important to highlight that it does not replace the other cholera prevention measures, like for instance regular hand washing under running safe water, drinking treated or boiled water, safe disposal of solid, liquid, and human waste, and observing food hygiene standards.

Distributed by APO Group on behalf of World Health Organization (WHO) - Zimbabwe.



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**INSIDE AIR
ZIMBABWE'S
BOEING
767-200ER**



Air Zimbabwe (UM) the Zimbabwean national airline has today unveiled a fresh out of a C-Check Boeing 767-200, MSN 24867 registered Z-WPF.

The 33 years old aircraft had its first flight on the 27th of September 1990 and was recently in storage before undergoing a C-Check. The 202 seater aircraft has 30 charlie class and 174 yankee class seats and the aircraft is powered by 2 Pratt and Whitney PW4056 engines.

African aviation commentators expected the airline to revamp the interior and install modern seats, fittings and fixtures in anticipation of long haul routes. Both Air Zimbabwe and Zimbabwean government officials have confirmed the airline poised to operate on international long haul routes and charter flights.

Tonderai Mangombe, Spokesperson for Airports Company of Zimbabwe expressed delight and Air Zimbabwe's plans for international routes, "the introduction of Boeing 767 long-haul routes at RGMIA has the potential to position the airport as a vital hub for long-distance travel, benefiting both the airport and the broader community it serves" he said.

Chat Ndege obtained exclusive images of the interior of Air Zimbabwe's Boeing 767-200ER.



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FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN ORPHANED BABY MONKEY AND KITTEN GOES VIRAL



The sweet friendship between an orphaned baby monkey and a kitten is melting hearts on social media. The duo lives at the animal sanctuary Twala Trust in Zimbabwe.



THE TWALA TRUST ANIMAL SANCTUARY is a non-profit organisation situated 25km east of the capital city, Harare. The Trust is run by Sarah Carter and Resident Veterinarian Dr Vinay Ramlaul, together with a dedicated team of staff and volunteers.

The focus of Twala is to provide a nurturing and safe haven for all animals and birds in need. Twala is home to 52 species of indigenous and exotic animals that were victims of human-wildlife conflict, injured, orphaned or abandoned.

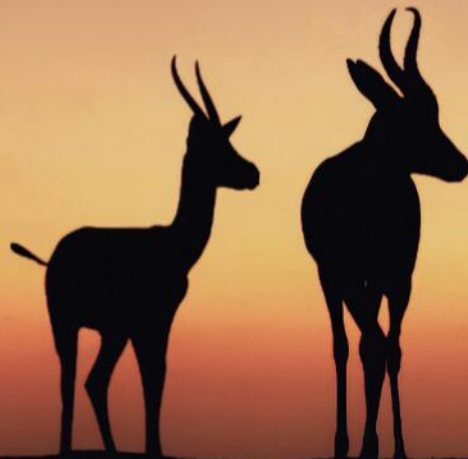




SAFARI SURVIVAL

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You've saved the money and organised the leave, and you're ready for your First African Safari. If you're travelling from afar - like anywhere out of Africa - and you're not independently wealthy, it may be your only one. So, because it is so much less painful and less expensive to learn from the mistakes of others rather than your own, here's a short summary of wisdom gleaned from numerous safaris.



Broad or narrow

Assuming you only have a week or two, do you choose, say, one park and stay there for the entire trip, or do you visit lots of different parks? This is a tricky one, and it depends on what you want. If you have a definite list of must-see animals, and they include, say sitatunga, black rhino, springbok and mountain gorilla, you will need to visit a number of different countries, never mind parks – and you will spend a lot of time in planes. If, however, you just want to see a good number of different animals and birds, spend time in the bush and totally de-stress, your best bet is to pick an area and stick to it, so you spend more time actually watching animals and chilling, and less time travelling.

Style or substance

While some safari destinations can only be accessed through one or maybe two operators, most offer a range of options when it comes to comfort, service and budget. Ultimately, this choice depends on how much time and money you have, but a good compromise between how luxurious and how long a holiday you can afford is to break it up. Do the bulk of your holiday low budget, eg camping or self-catering, and splurge on a full-service lodge for the first or last day or two. Even better, if you can afford it, is to do both. Start off with a luxury lodge – and take full advantage of your field guide by picking their brains about what you should look out for during the rest of your stay – and then travel budget and independent before ending the trip on another indulgent day or two of being spoiled before you head home





When to travel

If you can choose when to take your holiday, research your destination carefully to find out the best time for game viewing, birding, watching migrations, walking or whatever else constitutes your dream safari. Many of these things are seasonal – some exceptionally so – and if you have always wanted to see, for example, baby turtles you don't want to arrive at the lodge a week after the last one has waddled into the sea.

Staying healthy

One mosquito bite can ruin your whole holiday – and possibly end your life. Most safari destinations harbour vicious, malaria-carrying anopheles mosquitoes, so don't mess around. Buy the nastiest-smelling, most effective insect repellent – and use it! And chat to a medical professional about malaria prophylaxis. If you are travelling with young children, seriously consider a safari in a malaria-free area, like South Africa's Eastern Cape, Northern Cape or Waterberg, some of the high-lying parks in East Africa, or a low-risk malaria area like the Kalahari or Etosha. And find out from travel clinics whether you need, for example, yellow fever inoculations for your destination.

Packing

You need less than you think. You can do laundry in most places (or get it done for you) so you can get by with two or three outfits, and you really don't need more than two pairs of shoes.



Safari chic

It's amazing how many tourists turn up looking like an extra from Out of Africa, but animals will not be frightened away by a yellow shirt or blue jeans, so you don't need to wear khaki to go on safari. That said, most of the cool (in both senses) technical travel shirts and long pants do come in relatively muted colours, and they are so useful – light, crease-resistant, easy to wash and quick-drying. But cotton is also great, and it comes in – yes, khaki – but also so many more interesting colours, although you probably want to stick with neutral or pastel colours. Honestly, you can wear a floral sun dress during the day – as long as you have sunscreen. You want to stay away from dark colours, because tsetse flies and other insects are attracted to black, brown and – strangely – bright blue. And some insects are attracted to red (mostly butterflies, so that's not exactly terrifying). Carefully chosen prints don't show dirt that much, so that's a good idea, too. Of course, camouflage doesn't show dirt much, either, but it's not a good idea to travel with camouflage clothes, bags, etc, unless you enjoy being “randomly selected” at airports and border posts. In some African countries, wearing camouflage, or even having a camouflage toiletry bag, is illegal. Basically, wear clothes you like, and that you will want to continue wearing once you get back home.

Essentials

There are the obvious things you wouldn't ever leave home without, but there are also a few things you really should pack that may not occur to you if you haven't been on safari before. Here's a checklist, starting with the obvious.

- Insect repellent
- Day wear – see Safari Chic above
- Evening wear – if you're wearing shorts or a skirt during the day, you want at least one outfit consisting of a comfortable, cool, loose, light-coloured long-sleeved shirt and long pants to keep mozzies away. The shirt should have a cuff, and elastic on the bottom of the pants is also a good idea to keep the critters from flying up your legs. Wear closed shoes at night, preferably with socks that you have liberally sprayed with insect repellent.



- Warm clothing – Africa is not one great big sauna. It gets flippin' freezing in the early mornings on an open game-viewing vehicle. Bring a warm fleece, a beanie and scarf and – if you're travelling in winter – consider gloves. But do layers – it gets hot later.
- A waterproof shell or rain jacket – even in the so-called dry season.
- A good pair of closed walking shoes – and no - Manolo Blahnik flats do not qualify as good walking shoes anywhere outside of Manhattan. (Keeping your shoes sprayed with insect repellent is a good idea – both for night-time mosquitoes and day-time ticks and things.)

- Gaiters – if you are planning on walking even a few hundred metres in the bush, you will be grateful for these because there are few things more nigglingly irritating than burrs and prickly seeds in your socks.
- A pair of cool, comfy sandals
- A comfortable, light, broad-brimmed sun hat with a retaining cord
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- A kikoi or sarong – possibly the most useful item in the known universe, and it can be as colourful as you like.
- Water bottle – you will probably be offered bottled water at lodges, but try to minimise plastic, by carrying your own bottle and filling up from the main drinking water supply.
- Sports bra – those safari vehicles can be very, very bouncy on those rough tracks.
- Clear safety glasses – if you wear spectacles, you probably won't need these, but as your game drive heads into the evening you will have to take off your sunglasses – and that's when you find out just how many tiny flying insects there are. You can get comfy, clear plastic safety glasses very cheaply at hardware stores. They also come in yellow and orange, which are quite funky.
- Buff or bandanna – second only to a kikoi in terms of usefulness, and nice to pull up over your mouth and nose in dusty conditions, or keep your hair under control in the wind.
- Binoculars and camera
- Bird book and/or other field guides (not essential but nice).
- Torch – luxury lodges usually supply them, but it's worth packing a small one – or a head torch.



TRAVEL

Info

Zimbabwe

