

The Magic of Africa

by Maxine Albert - www.mfuwelodge.com



I SIP A GIN AND TONIC ON THE AFRICAN QUEEN riverboat as the setting sun slips into the mighty Zambezi River and a giraffe, rhino and zebra browse among the acacia trees on the riverbank.

My African adventure began with a non-stop flight to Johannesburg on South African Airways where service and comfort are top priority and I indulged in some fabulous regional port wines.

Situated in south-central Africa, Zambia is considered the continent's last wilderness paradise. Its South Luangwa National Park is renowned for unspoiled beauty and a rich and varied concentration of game and wildlife.

Mfuwe Lodge where I stayed, located inside the National Park and built entirely of local materials, supports various charities that protect wildlife and provide doctors and teachers to the valley's villages.

Exquisite meals and afternoon tea are served in the open-air lodge. Eighteen beautifully decorated en-suite chalets with private decks overlooking the lagoon allow you to take in the sights and sounds of the surrounding bush.

I fell asleep to the sound of hippos' nocturnal calls and awoke to baboons' mischievous morning antics.

We encountered magnificent lions, elephants, hippos, leopards and other gorgeous wildlife on our daily early-morning and afternoon safari drives in an open Land Rover with our guide, Chief Mambwe.

Sundowner cocktails and hors d'oeuvres were served in the bush against a backdrop of the sublime African sunset.

We went on to Livingstone for an elephant-back ride and a breathtaking visit to Victoria Falls. Afterwards we shared a delicious dinner with the people of Songwe Village.

Sitting around a fire under the stars, we talked about family, friends and life in general. Their warm smiles, their laughter, these people who spoke from their hearts – this is the magic of Africa, a land I will never forget.

