



## **WHITE WATER RAFTING**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Commercial rafting first commenced on the Zambezi River in 1981 and since then this activity has grown in popularity to the point where a rafting trip on the Zambezi is now a regular feature in most tourists' itineraries. In 1997, approximately 50 000 people enjoyed white water rafting on the Zambezi on a stretch of water that is now internationally acclaimed as the best white water rafting trip available in the world.

### **PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE RIVER**

The Zambezi River is classified as a high volume, pool-drop river i.e. there is little exposed rock either in the rapids or the pools below the rapids. The distance between rapids varies from 100 metres to 2 kms. The Gorge itself is approximately 400ft deep at the put-in point and 750ft at the take out point. The river drops about 400ft over the 24km covered in the one-day raft trip and the depth of the river can reach 200ft. The British Canoe Union has classified the river Grade 5 "extremely difficult, long and violent rapids, steep gradients, big drops and pressure areas". Nearly half of the rapids negotiated are Grade 5. (Grade 6 is unrunable – rapid number 9, "Commercial Suicide" is a Grade 6 rapid and we porter around this rapid).

### **WILDLIFE**

Due to the steepness of the Gorge, wildlife is not abundant. On occasion klipspringer, rock hyrax, vervet monkeys and baboon are spotted. However, the birdlife is far more spectacular. Black eagle, augur buzzard, black stork, pied and giant kingfisher and red winged starling are some of the birds normally seen during the trips and sightings of the very rare Taita Falcon are not uncommon. There are crocodile in the river, but they are small due to the unsuitability of the area for their habitation.

### **RAFTING OPTIONS**

The ONE-DAY trip runs year round subject to river levels and Safari Par Excellence operates from both sides of the Zambezi River.

High Water run – approximately 20 January to 10 July (stopping in between if river too high).

Low Water run – approximately 10 July to 20 January.

The popularity of the Low Water Rafting run on the Zambian side of the Zambezi River is due to the opportunity of experiencing the incredible view of the Victoria Falls from the Boiling Pot. **PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED TO CROSS THE ZAMBIAN BORDER.**

During the Low Water season Safari Par Excellence offers an overnight and 2.5 day trip to the Batoka Dam site (approximately 56kms down stream from the Victoria Falls).

Full Day and Overnight – Clients will overnight at our camp, which is situated above rapid number 23. Tents, bedrolls and sleeping bags will be provided by Safari Par Excellence. All meals and soft drinks are complimentary. Clients must arrange and pay for preferred alcoholic beverages before departure. Safari Par Excellence supplies beers (Castle), red and white wine and gin & tonic. Clients are transferred back to the Safari Par Excellence office the next morning at 10h00. The drive from the gorge is approximately 30km long.

*Tailor-made multi-day trips are available on request, only during the Low Water season.*

### **MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM PAX**

4 pax minimum. Large groups on request.

### **AGE RESTRICTION**

The minimum age is 15 years. The maximum age limit is dependent on the individual's general state of health and physical fitness.

### **FOOD AND DRINKS SUPPLIED**

Tea and coffee is supplied at the meeting point, prior to departure on the Zimbabwe side. Full English breakfast, tea and coffee is served at the Waterfront meeting point, prior to departure on the Zambian side. On the river each raft carries water. A light lunch consisting of cold meats and salads is provided at a picturesque spot on the banks of the river. At the top of the Gorge, at the end of the trip, complimentary soft drinks, cordials and beers are enjoyed. On the Zambian side the clients are transferred to the Waterfront for a Braai / Barbeque at the auditorium where shortly afterwards the video is shown. It is recommended that clients take their credit card or cash with them, when rafting in Zambia only, so as to purchase merchandise and drinks at the braai.

### **DEPARTURE TIMES AND MEETING PLACES**

#### **ZAMBIA – THE WATERFRONT**

Low Water	-	08h00	(Rapids 1-21)
High Water	-	08h00	(Rapids 11-25)

#### **ZIMBABWE – SHOP 4, PHUMULA CENTRE**

Low Water	-	08h30	(Rapids 4-22)
High Water	-	08h30	(Rapids 11-23)

If clients are going rafting in Zambia, but being picked up in Zimbabwe, they will be picked up between 07h00-07h30 from their hotels.

If clients are going rafting in Zimbabwe, they will be picked up from their hotels (between 08h00-08h30). They are however, requested to reconfirm pick up times and hotels with our Victoria Falls office 24 hours before departure. Clients can otherwise meet at the Zim Office located at Shop 4, Phumula Centre, Vic Falls at 08h30.

### **VIDEOS AND PHOTOGRAPHS**

Whilst on the river, videos and photographs will be taken by "Zambezi Memories". Rafting videos and photographs will be shown that evening at a venue to be advised and will be on display in the office (Shop 4, Phumula Centre) the following day for the

overnight clients. Copies of all products shown are available for purchase. For those who raft in Zambia, their video will be shown at The Waterfront, directly after their rafting. Videos and photographs will then be available for purchase, later that evening at the show venue or the following day at the SafPar Office (Shop 4, Phumula Centre).

## **2.5 DAY TRIP**

Clients run the usual one day section of the river to our overnight camp below rapid no 23 where they spend the first night. The following day they continue down from no 23 to the proposed Batoka Gorge Dam Site, approximately 56kms from Victoria Falls. Clients will be confronted with rapids known as Open Season, The Narrows, Chimamba, Upper and Lower Mowemba and finally exiting above the proposed dam site. The second night is spent at the top of the gorge overlooking the stunning hills and valleys that form the Batoka Gorge. The clients will then be transferred back to Victoria Falls the following morning.

## **FOOD AND DRINKS SUPPLIED**

On overnights we supply dinner and a full cooked breakfast. On the 2.5 day trips we supply all meals. The camps are stocked with limited beers, wines, soft drinks and gin and tonics. Clients must bring their own spirits if they wish.

## **DEPARTURE TIMES AND MEETING PLACES**

All trips leave from Zimbabwe. We will do a trip on any day for a guaranteed booking of 4 or more pax. Overnights can be done on any day.

## **MINIMUM / MAXIMUM PAX**

Overnight	Min Pax 2	Max Pax 20
2.5 Day Trip	Min Pax 4	Max Pax 20
5 Day Trip	Min Pax 4	Max Pax 20

## **5-DAY TRIP**

- ◆ DAY ONE : Full day of rafting as usual one-day low water rafting trip and camping below rapid 23, overnight camp.
- ◆ DAY TWO : From hereafter the flat stretches between rapids becomes longer. Your first rapid is "Open Season". We then continue through "The Narrows" and "Chimamba", where we stop for lunch. After lunch we head on down the river to our overnight campsite just beyond "Upper Mowemba".
- ◆ DAY THREE : After portaging "Lower Mowemba" we continue along to the dam site where we do our third and final portage. After this we move on to our campsite located downstream on a beach in the gorge.
- ◆ DAY FOUR : Continue down stream to "Ghost Rider" then "Deep Throat" where we ghost the rafts through while having lunch. Raft through another section of narrows with short sharp drops, very exciting. We then conclude the day with "Asleep at the Wheel" which is the last major rapid of the trip. Camp downstream of "Asleep at the Wheel".

- ◆ DAY FIVE : We continue on navigating through "Asleep at the Wheel", "Fish Eagle's Delight" and on to our take out point at Matetsi where we are transported back to the Falls. The transfer is a 3-hour drive along the road from Hwange to Milibizi.

The trip includes:

- ◆ All meals and soft drinks (small amount of beers, gin & tonics, however due to the longevity of the trip these are not bottomless supplies. Should clients have a preferred alcohol, they must supply these themselves).
- ◆ The Guide, all rafting equipment, sleeping bags and first aid kit.

## **VIDEOS AND PHOTOGRAPHS**

2.5 day and 5 day trip videos can be arranged on request.

## **EXPERIENCE AND FITNESS**

No previous rafting experience is required and clients need not be proficient swimmers. At the beginning and at the end of the half, one and 2.5 day raft trip clients have to negotiate a steep path in and out of the gorge. The walk out is 750 vertical feet up a gradient of 1 in 3, and a person of average fitness can manage this in about 20 minutes.

## **RAFTS AND EQUIPMENT**

The company uses some of the finest equipment on the market to ensure that the trip is a safe and enjoyable one. Rafts are purchased from Ark in South Africa and are the tried and tested river rafts required for the Zambezi River. America's Cup high flotation life jackets and Protec safety helmets are issued to clients before the day's rafting. Wet suits are provided and usually used by clients during the colder months (June / July). We supply all camping equipment, tents, sleeping bags, mattresses, dry bags, etc. on our overnight and 2.5 day trips. Clients need to bring shorts, T-Shirts, costume, shoes, towel and tracksuit for the evenings, cap, sunglasses, sunscreen and toiletries.

## **GUIDES AND SAFETY**

Guides are fully trained professionals and all hold valid advanced first aid certificates. Whilst every precaution is taken, it is essential that agents make clients aware that there is a risk of injury associated with the activity of rafting on the Zambezi. A comprehensive first aid kit and skid stretcher are carried on each trip. Each client is required to sign the Safari Par Excellence White Water Rafting indemnity form prior to departure. Each trip leader is in radio contact with our bases in Victoria Falls and Livingstone and direct with M.A.R.S. (Medical Air Rescue Service).

## **VISA / CLIENT REQUIREMENTS**

Passports are required to cross the Zambian border for clients from Zimbabwe. The cost of day visitors visas for clients from Zimbabwe are included in the rate.

## **INSURANCE**

All clients are covered by Medical Air Rescue Services (MARS) through Safari Par Excellence, **however** this only covers them for emergency evacuation in life threatening situations. It **does not** cover their hospitalisation and medication. As such travel and medical insurance is **compulsory** for all clients. Please ensure all clients bring the

details of their insurance policy with them. Safari Par Excellence will not cover clients should they not have insurance.