



Dusty Tracks

Family Expedition to Malawi

Dusty Tracks - Out of the Box Family Expeditions to Malawi



We have worked with you to put together an itinerary that offers an incredible cultural experience for your children. One that will offer them a glimpse of a totally different way of life, where the basic need to provide food, water and health are a priority and where education is not a given- it is a privilege. A challenge that will offer the chance to hike in one of Africa's most beautiful landscapes, overnighting in a mountain hut, swapping stories with your guides and porters around the open fire. The treat of a days safari, drifting down the Shire River watching large herds of elephants coming to the banks to drink, the highlight of heading out at dusk searching for the park's more nocturnal wildlife... And to the rural villages of Zomba, a chance to connect with children at the local school, be part of village life, meet young families, take part in renovating a village nursery school, playing dusty village netball, joining a family for a traditional homestay - an opportunity to gain key skills and experiences that will inspire, challenge and expand your horizons.



The Basics

- The main language in Malawi is Chichewa but English is taught at school and is widely spoken.
- Malawi has a good network of tarmac roads and journey times are usually between 1-4 hrs. We aim for you to arrive at your destination before dusk.
- Malawi has limited electricity supply (only 14% of the country is connected to mains electricity). Many hotels rely on back up generators and/or solar power.
- Malawi has good 4G connection across most of the country.
- Blantyre and Lilongwe are the country's main cities and both have good hospital facilities.

Emergency Support

- A dedicated team in Malawi available 24/7.
- A local guide will be with your group every step of the way. They will become an integral part of your team.
- We offer bi-annual guide training in first aid, advanced driving, basic mechanics & environmental awareness.
- Our guides take bi-annual exams to refresh their in country knowledge and emergency procedures.
- All Vehicles have seat belts and are fully insured with passenger liability insurance (buses).

Travelling with Children in Africa



The Benefits

Travelling with your family to Africa can be enormously rewarding and have a huge impact on your whole family. Preparing for your trip, the journey to reach Africa, the cultural exchanges, and work you do within the community all have huge educational value, leave lasting memories, create lifelong links and hopefully encourage your children to gain a basic understanding of Global Citizenship and what this means in today's world.

The Challenges

- **Travelling During Term Time**
If you approach your school with a two-fold educational plan, what your child will learn and how your child will “keep up,” you will be very likely to be met with enthusiasm and encouragement from the educational establishment. (See slide 7)
- **Long Haul Travel**
 - You will have one long leg into Africa (9-11hrs) and then a further 2-4 hrs into Malawi. No jet lag!

Malaria

Malaria is present in Malawi. It is much more prevalent in the hotter wet season (Oct-March) and when mosquitoes are most active, at night. Each accommodation chosen is equipped with mosquito nets and rooms are sprayed regularly. We highly recommend you take suitable preventative measures such as prophylactics and use mosquito repellent in the evenings.

<http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/malaria-prevention-malaria>



Population: 19.89 million (World Bank 2021)

Size: 118,480 km

Average Annual Income
(per capita): \$579.7 per annum (IMF 2023)

Life Expectancy: 65.6 years (WHO 2019)

Religion:

Christian 82%, Muslim 13.9%, Other 1.9%, None 2.5%

Rated Africa's happiest country!

Overview

Malawi is Africa at its purest, offering unique and extraordinary travels. From its undulating mountains to the shores of its stunning lake, the fact that Malawi has traditionally been overlooked as a mainstream destination means that you will find hidden gems at every turn, Malawi supports a diversity of landscapes, ecosystems and cultures and is affectionately known as 'The Warm Heart of Africa'.

Family Travel

A peaceful, welcoming, warm hidden slice of Africa. Malawi is ideal for an off the beaten track family travel destination. It's peaceful history and good transport infrastructure make it easy and safe to get around and its raw culture and welcoming smiles are a highlight of the destination.

Highlights and Links to Education



Your Expedition and The UN Global Goals

- Making Ice Tea on a working Fairtrade Tea Estate (Industry/Responsible Production)
- Hiking on Mulanje Mountain, South Central Africa's highest mountain (Climate Action)
- Village Homestay (No Poverty/Zero Hunger)
- Wildlife Game Drive and River Boat Safari (Life on Land/Life Below Water)
- Literacy in rural village setting (Quality Education/Gender Equality)
- Cultural Dance (Reduced Inequalities/Partnerships for the goals)
- Snorkelling & Kayaking in Lake Malawi (Life below Water)

UN Global Goals Sustainable Development Goals

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health and Well Being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
10. Reduced Inequalities
11. Sustainable Cities/Communities
12. Responsible Production/Consumption
13. Climate Action
14. Life below Water
15. Life on Land
16. Peace and Justice
17. Partnerships for the goals

Lake Malawi Community Project



Lake Malawi Youth Group

Arrive at the community library and you will be greeted by a dedicated group of young people brimming over with tales to tell and challenges they are facing to develop their community. Determined to be self reliant this group of school leavers work across the community trying to improve healthcare, education, equal rights and environmental awareness. Headed up by Joseph they spend their days mobilising other young people in the area, mentoring vulnerable school students and coming up with ways to ensure the work they are doing is self sustaining. We've worked with the group for 15 years and run an ecotourism programme within the communities as well as supporting Rainbow Secondary School and the environmental centre. We believe that working with a community organisation ensures that the links we make reach more people and are more equitably shared.

Meet Joseph Makwakwa

Joseph is a retired boatbuilder and has lived in the area all his life. He is the founder of Community Initiative for Self Reliance (CISER) and provides leadership to the team of young people whose passion is to support the rural communities in the area. Through links with Orbis, Joseph is a leader in ecotourism and environmental awareness in Malawi. Joseph's son Blessings acts as the communication officer between the groups and CISER. They will be your hosts during your community visit.

Community Activities- Example of Activities



Mentoring- Secondary School

Work with small groups of students in a seminar format. Discuss key barriers to success for young people in Malawi: completing education, getting into university, career prospects and how to achieve their goals. Each session will be planned with the Head Teacher and the local youth group will be there to offer support.

Primary School

The village primary school is a hive of activity and children are welcome to join a lesson, read with the younger pupils, play sport or help paint a classroom with children their age. Parents can get involved with teaching, making resources, and meeting the teachers to discuss the challenges faced at Malawian primary schools.

Extra Curricular

Join a family to prepare a traditional fish lunch, run a mini olympics challenge at the school, work with a local entrepreneur to create a website, plant seedlings at the community environmental centre, lead a reading session at the library with pre school children or help with homework club. The options are endless.....

- Each community activity can be done as a whole family or you can choose to split into parents and children or mothers/daughters, fathers/sons etc.
- If you have a particular interest we can tailor make your community experience to include activities where you can share your skills/interests.
- We work in partnership with community based organisations to ensure your visit is culturally sensitive and beneficial to all involved. Each visit to a Partnered community acts as an ecotourism income generating activity - the cost for this is included in your expedition package.

Expedition Outline



Day 1

Meet your Guide and transfer to your Blantyre based hotel. Afternoon acclimatising, visiting a local market and swimming in the pool. Evening orientation briefing over dinner. (BB)

Day 2

Drive out of the city and into the rolling tea estates. Have lunch at Huntingdon House Lodge and spend the afternoon making ice tea and learning about the Fair Trade Tea Estate. Transfer to Mulanje Mountain (1 hour). Settle into your mountain base camp hostel (850m). (BB)

*Hiking Mount Mulanje

Please note that the hike up Mulanje Mountain is for people of a medium to high fitness level. The climb is around 1000m in elevation and can take between 5-7hrs. For those wanting a shorter hike there is an option of a day hike to the waterfalls. Please note porters are included to carry any extra luggage.

<http://www.mcm.org.mw>

Example only- each of our Dusty Tracks Expeditions are tailor made to your groups interests, budget and timeframe.

Day 3

Meet your mountain guide and porters after breakfast and *hike to Lichenya Hut (5-7hrs, 1850m) Take a break on route for a picnic lunch. Arrive mid afternoon at Lichenya, relax before starting the camp fire and preparing supper. (Basic Hut Accommodation, Dorm Bed, FB)

Day 4

Rise early and pack up the hut before setting off across the plateau- witness the beautiful landscape of Mulanje before starting your descent stopping on route for a picnic lunch and swim at the waterfalls. Arrive back at base camp mid afternoon. Pizza supper! (FB)

Expedition Outline



Day 5

Depart Mulanje and drive 2 hrs to Zomba Plateau. After lunch pack a small overnight bag and head into the village to meet your *homestay family. Help prepare the evening meal before settling in for the night around the fire. Night spent within traditional Malawian family village house. (DBB)

Day 6

Rise early to the sounds of village life. Join your family for their morning routine - collecting water & working in the garden. Meet the local youth group for a village walk and farewells. Depart to Liwonde National Park, arriving in time for an evening 4 x 4 Game Drive (DBB)

Day 7

After breakfast head out on a river boat safari, this is a fantastic opportunity to see herds of elephant drinking on the banks of the river! Relax at camp before sundowners and an evening 4x4 Game Drive (FB)

Day 8

After breakfast and a final safari activity, meet back with your Guide and drive to the shores of Lake Malawi. Meet the local youth group and enjoy a traditional village lunch before walking through the community acclimatising to your project location. Check in to your lakeside hotel. (DBB)

Day 9

Day spent working on community activities (see page 9 for example projects you can get involved in)

*Homestay Experience

This is a very basic experience. The idea is to spend 24 hrs with a Malawian family experiencing life in a village setting and gaining an understanding of the cultural differences with your own lifestyle and daily routine. This activity acts as an income generating business for the host family. Bottled water, mattresses and mosquito nets will be provided. If you would prefer to just arrange a day visit then we can provide alternative accommodation close by.

Expedition Outline



Day 10

Day spent working on community activities (see page 9 for example projects you can get involved in)

Day 11

Village farewell before meeting with your Guide and transferring by road (1hrs) to Cape Maclear. Kayak to Domwe Island (45 mins) and spend the evening on the island round the campfire - supper under the stars. Sleep under canvas to the sounds of the waves lapping below.(DBB)

Day 12

Kayaking, snorkelling, swimming*- or just relax on the island beach. This rustic Robinson Crusoe island is the ideal setting to complete your Malawi expedition. Meals are served from the simple beach side fire. The island has eco facilities and no electricity - an incredible experience - total peace and quiet! (FB)

Day 13

After breakfast on the beach at Domwe, kayak back to the mainland and visit the curio sellers that line the beach streets of Cape Maclear. After lunch at a beachside cafe you will transfer back to Blantyre and have a final meal out in the city with your guide. (BB)

Day 14

Transfer by road to the airport (30 mins) and connect with your international flight.

*Swimming in Lake Malawi does carry the risk of contracting Bilharzia <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/schistosomiasis/Pages/Introduction.aspx>.

Domwe Island is tested annually and in recent years there have been no positive samples that show the parasite causing bilharzia is present in the waters surrounding the island. However, if you are concerned we can arrange for alternative accommodation in a larger hotel with a swimming pool.

Costings



Adults from: \$3,950 pp

Children (4yrs-12yrs) from: \$980 pp

- *Based on 4 pax

Inclusions: All Accommodation, Meals (where stated) All Transport (inc. fuel & driver), Orbis Guide, All Project set up and support, All Activities (where applicable), All local Taxes and Bank Fees.

Exclusions: Return International Flights, Meals not included, Activities not included, Personal Travel Insurance, Visas, Bar Drinks, Tips & Items of a personal nature

*We're committed to ensuring the benefits of tourism reach local communities and have set up a Payment for Eco-System Services Scheme which contributes 1.5% of all bookings to community environmental projects in Malawi.

Example only- each of our Dusty Tracks Expeditions are tailor made to your groups interests, budget and timeframe.



Who we are

Orbis DMC is a specialist expedition company working in Educational, Experiential & Philanthropic Travel to Malawi, Africa.

Operating exclusively in Malawi, we work with Schools, Universities, Charities, Businesses & Individuals creating highly personalised expeditions which connect people with the world as Global Citizens.

Owned and managed by Inno Kaliati and Dom Webb, the company has offices in both the UK (Devon) and Malawi (Blantyre) and has over 15 years experience within the industry.

Orbis Brand Manifesto

- We believe in the potential of Malawi's people and that empowering them via tourism offers a chance to develop out of the poverty cycle.
- We believe that when promoting a fragile destination the benefits need to reach the local communities.
- We are committed to building the local economy in Malawi. By employing local people and creating sustainable growth through social enterprise, we aim to reduce the dependence on the aid industry.
- We believe in balance. Our tailored, educational and culturally diverse experiences awaken minds and inspire future generations.
- We are committed to developing Global Citizenship.