

IS ZIMBABWE A SAFE SAFARI DESTINATION?



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The question above is one that has to be asked by any potential safari client, and answered by safari companies and or their booking agents, no matter which country in Africa is being considered for a safari. These days, Zimbabwe outfitters and agents are especially busy reassuring clients, both perspective and those already booked, that Zimbabwe is a safe travel destination.

As one of that countries largest safari firms, Chifuti Safaris is certainly in a position to address that question, as we are on the ground there year round. With both of the company owners and the majority of our professional hunters and their families living in Harare, we know far better than overseas journalists the exact state of affairs in Zimbabwe.

Once the client arrives in our Zambezi safari areas, the only Africans you will come into contact with work for Chifuti Safaris or Zimbabwe Parks Department. They are not only friendly and professional, they are exceptionally happy to have you there as you represent their livelihood.

Our concessions are incredibly remote and far removed from the closest urban areas. The country of Zimbabwe certainly has it's share of problems with well chronicled and deteriorating economic situations. With the collapse of the Zim dollar, all business is now being conducted with the US dollar., making it easier for the traveling hunter.

The good news is that the government understands the importance of foreign exchange brought into the country as a direct result of safari hunting. Chifuti Safaris is the single largest source of revenue for the Zimbabwe Parks Department and we have an excellent relationship with the governing board of this important department.

The government, in spite of the many unwise decisions and actions of the past, has taken great care to ensure the safari business, and the safari operators responsible for the money coming into the country, are treated respectfully and not subject to government interference. Zimbabwe needs the safari industry, and continues to take great pains to maintain good relations with it's various operators, including it's best customer, Chifuti Safaris.

There are absolutely no records of problems with security due to unrest in big game safari areas. If that situation should change, the client will not have to contact Safari Classics or Chifuti Safaris, **WE WILL CONTACT THE CLIENT!** No safari operator will ever send a client into an area with the potential for problems.

Each year our office handles an incredible number of calls from clients who are booked with Chifuti and are concerned about a blurb in the paper or a story on TV. Please understand that no one has a better finger on the pulse of Zimbabwe than we do. Our owners, staff, and their families live there and know immediately of all government decisions and or political situations. Our Safari Classics offices are in constant contact with the Harare office and we stay updated on a daily basis.

Yes, the population is suffering under the heavy hand of the current government, but that fact in no way affects your safari. Zimbabwe, like every other African country, is a one party system, plain and simple. There is no civil war looming, as there is no opposition party contesting the current government.

Some may ask "How can you support this government with your business?" Our response is "Money spent on safari is crucial to the survival of Zimbabwe's wildlife. Pull the financial plug and Zimbabwe will quickly be as stripped of wildlife as Kenya".

Look forward to your safari, and be assured that should a problem or situation arise that you need to be aware of, our office will immediately contact you to discuss the situation.