

A Safe Destination?

The above question is one that is asked by many potential Safari clients, no matter which country in Africa is being considered for a safari. Zimbabwe outfitters and agents are especially reassuring clients, both potential and those already booked, that Zimbabwe really is a safe travel destination.

As one of that country's largest safari operators, Martin Pieters Safaris is certainly in a position to address that question. With both the company owners and the majority of our professional hunters and their families living in Bulawayo, we know far better than overseas journalists the exact state of affairs in Zimbabwe.

Here are some facts that will help put your mind at ease:

No safari company in Zimbabwe books more dangerous game safaris than Martin Pieters Safaris, and not a single security issue has been raised to date.

Upon arrival in the country you will be met by either a Martin Pieters Safaris representative or by one of the reliable and responsible pilots who will be flying your charter in to camp.

After your luggage is collected and firearms permit secured, you will either be taken through to the charter aircraft by the pilot, or depending on your arrival time, our Martin Pieters Safaris rep will drive you 20 minutes into Bulawayo to one of a number of comfortable B&B lodges where you can relax until your flight to camp the next morning.

The next morning, you will be escorted back to the airport where you will meet your pilot for your charter flight into the valley.

There are no roadblocks to deal with, no long travel by vehicle through urban areas, or any stage of travel that finds the Martin Pieters Safaris client unsupervised.

Once the client arrives in our Zambezi safari areas, the only Africans you will come into contact with work for Martin Pieters Safaris or Zimbabwe National Parks Department, or a few local villagers from the CAMPFIRE area.

They are 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.

Zimbabwe certainly has its share of problems with well chronicled and deteriorating economic situations.

The good news is that the government understands the importance of foreign exchange brought into the country as a direct result of safari hunting. Martin Pieters Safaris one of the largest sources of revenue for the Nyaminyami Rural District Council, who oversee the largest CAMPFIRE area in Zimbabwe and we have an excellent relationship with the governing board of this important department.

The government 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 its various operators.

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 their agent or Martin Pieters Safaris, **WE WILL CONTACT THE CLIENT!**

No safari operator will ever send a client into an area with the potential for problems. End of story.

Each year our office handles an incredible number of calls from clients who are booked with us and are in a panic about a blurb in the paper, a story on TV, or a re-release of a State

Dept. warning. 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 situation.

Yes, the population is suffering under the heavy hand of the current government, but that fact in no way affects your safari.

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.

If you need any further reassurance please do hesitate to contact us.