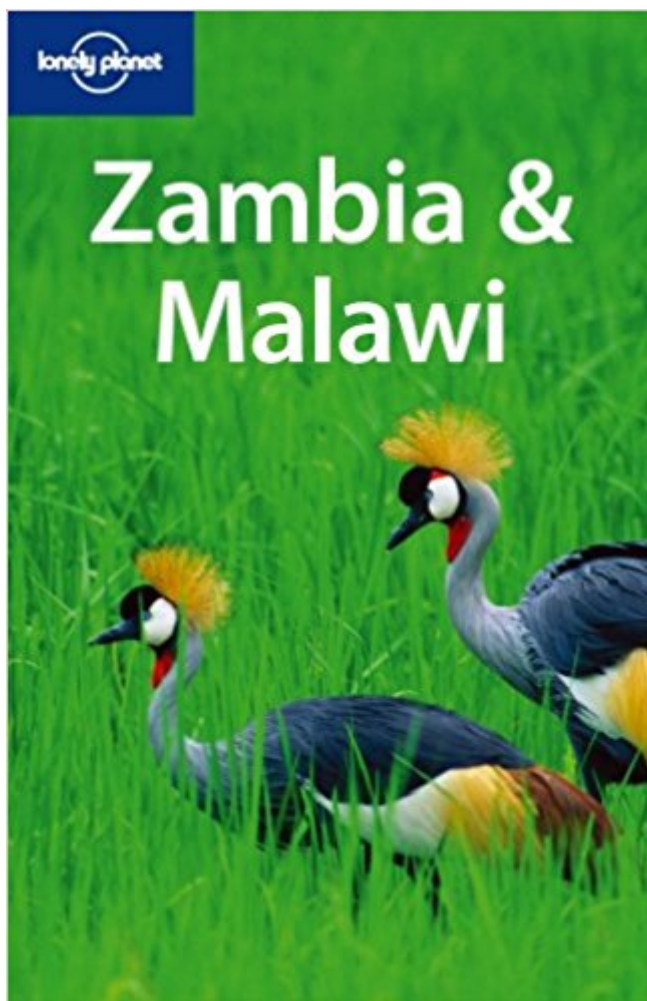




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Lonely Planet Zambia & Malawi (Multi Country Travel Guide)



Synopsis

Take Lonely Planet's first edition of Zambia & Malawi on your travels and you'll be wildlife spotting on safari in unspoilt national parks; gazing at the thundering might of Victoria Falls; watching Kuomboka, one of the last great Southern African ceremonies; or relaxing beachside at Nkhata Bay. Why not do it all? Lonely Planet guides are written by experts who get to the heart of every destination they visit. This brand new edition is packed with accurate, practical and honest advice, designed to give you the information you need to make the most of your trip. In This Guide: Detailed itineraries take you from Zambia's magnificent wildlife to Malawi's stunning lakes Ecofriendly tips to help you make your travels green Color chapter on wildlife, wild places and where to chill out

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

My girlfriend and I are planning a trip to Zambia. Being anal, I bought three Zambia books and borrowed one from the library. I was excited about this particular one because it was published most recently. But, without a doubt, this is the worst among the four. With a few exceptions, sections for most places consist entirely of places to sleep and eat, and very little else. The Bradt book was the best - the difference was night and day. Even the thin thin Globetrotter had more information for many places than this lonely planet one. There are very few differences between the earlier lonely planet Zambia book and this one, except the additional Malawi information. I concur entirely with the other reviewer about the book's poor quality. I have travelled to many parts of the world carrying only lonely planet guides. It is sad to have my long admiration for this line of books tarnished.

Lonely Planet couldn't have made this book worse if they tried. The introductory chapters desperately try to justify combining Zambia and Malawi into one book and are so brief that I felt more confused after reading them than before. There are only eight, large print pages of history for the two countries. The "Colour chapter on wildlife, wild places and where to chill out" advertised on the back of the book is a mere six pages containing incredibly useful information like "The beauty of the wildlife is not just the big five," whatever that means. This colour section has a couple pictures of animals, mountains and buildings and that is all. The book has only one page talking about wildlife and this gives no actual information. The guide itself is so full of inaccuracies that you could probably successfully sue Lonely Planet for false advertising given the bold "100% Researched and Updated" statement printed on the book's spine. I traveled in the two countries for around a month in July 2010, only four months after its publication date, and found it to be around 75% inaccurate. Almost all the prices in the book were off by a long shot. Some prices were double what the book said they were and others were much cheaper. In some places the book just doesn't give the prices so you have no idea what you're getting into. Things were misplaced on maps and a lot of the maps were not to scale. The travel information in the book is inconsistent and this makes it impossible to know what to expect. For example, the book says that from Livingston to Sesheke costs 32,690 kwacha and takes five hours but then says that from Sesheke to Livingston costs 45,000 kwacha and takes two hours. It says that between Livingston and Mongu costs 51,370 kwacha and from Mongu to Livingston costs 120,000 kwacha and takes ten hours. These types of inconsistencies are everywhere. What's more is that you can't even make 51,370 kwacha or 32,690 kwacha because the smallest bill that they use is 50 kwacha. I have no idea where they got this information from. Also, the book is very poor when it comes to local transport. In many places, they simply tell you to take a taxi (and then tell you an unrealistically high price for it) rather than tell you which minibus to take. Sometimes, they state to call the hotel or campsite to figure out how to get there instead of publishing the information. It's not just prices that they are wrong about. In some areas they say that minibuses run when in reality, minibuses haven't been in the area in living memory because the roads are so bad. In other places they recommend to simply hitch and make it sound like you're going to be on the side of the highway when the reality is that there may be one car going down the road every other day. They say that there are frequent minibuses when there are weekly minibuses. They say there is a bus, but there isn't. They say there is no bus but there is. This book was wrong so often, that I gave up on it completely and the only reason I didn't throw it out was so that I could write them to tell them how bad it is. This book mostly contains descriptions of hotels.

Some of the hotel descriptions are half a page long and even tell you what colour the paint in the hotel is and how high the ceilings are. There are four pages of hotel descriptions for Lusaka, but only one page for actual sights and no mention of the city's history. Every section is like this. I think that at least half this book is senseless hotel description. Budget lodges are largely overlooked. Several times, I quite easily found a lodge that was twice as cheap and exactly the same as what Lonely Planet recommended. The book, especially the Zambia chapters, only really covers touristy areas. The Zambia section is basically a list of national parks and lengthy accounts of the lodges that you can stay in. That is all. Huge chunks of the country are not even mentioned. If you plan on seeing anything besides national parks, this book will not help you at all. When you take away the needless hotel descriptions and consider all the inaccuracies, you are left with nothing but cutesy filler. It is completely useless. I have never been so disappointed with a purchase in my life. Buy any other travel guide.

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