

PORTUGAL
BY BIKE

VOYAGE TO
ANTARCTICA

ETHIOPIA
UP CLOSE

KAYAKING
COSTA RICA

TRAVEL + LEISURE

The Adventure Issue

PLUS
WHERE
and how
TO SAFARI
NOW



The Dog House at Zambia's Tongabezi Lodge, which overlooks the Zambezi River.

Zambia on the Rise

How did an under-the-radar gem become the safari destination of the year? **LISA GRAINGER** reports.

"You can see animals by canoe and on foot, so safaris are really varied."

The newly expanded airport in Livingstone, which reopened last year, has made journeys more comfortable, and the governments of Zimbabwe and Zambia agreed to a joint visa, allowing visitors to enter both countries on one permit. There are also plenty of appealing new places to stay, including **King Lewanika Lodge** (normancarsafaris.com; from \$1,070), in the remote Liuwa Plain National Park, which offers access to the second-largest wildebeest migration after the Serengeti. At Victoria Falls, African Bush Camps has turned **Thorntree River Lodge** (africanbushcamps.com; from \$600) into a contemporary eco-camp with private plunge pools, while the popular **Tongabezi Lodge** (tongabezi.com; from \$775) has upgraded its living spaces along the banks of the Zambezi River.

The best news of all? The price, Trotter said. "A safari in Zambia will cost you about half as much as one in Botswana," and rates often include activities, meaning you get more Big Five bang for your buck.

Ask a group of safari specialists to pick an emerging destination for 2017, and you'll hear Zambia mentioned again and again. That's because the southern African country—home to Victoria Falls, 20 national parks, and some of the continent's best wildlife—is hitting its stride as a high-end option, thanks to improved access and some impressive lodge openings.

"Zambia has the greatest all-round wilderness experience in Africa, alongside Botswana," said Giles Trotter, director of the online safari portal **Timbuktu** (timbuktuttravel.com).

EXPERT TIP
Get familiar with the entry requirements in Africa before you start planning. Research things like the East Africa "One Visa" and the countries that offer e-visas or visas on arrival.

—Volker Altvater of Big Five Tours & Expeditions (bigfive.com)

To see how T+L readers ranked top safari outfitters in our World's Best Awards, go to tandl.me/worldsbest.

NEW FRONTIERS

For next-level wildlife kicks, intrepid travelers are looking east.

India **AndBeyond's** new 13-day expedition through the Ladakh region of the Himalayas offers serious adventurers the chance to track unique wildlife—including the endangered and highly evasive snow leopard—amid breathtaking scenery. andbeyond.com; 13 days from \$6,495.

Sri Lanka Opening this fall on the edge of Yala National Park, in southeastern Sri Lanka, **Wild Coast Tented Lodge** features 28 podlike tents set back from a deserted beach. The park has one of the world's highest leopard densities, as well as communities of elephants and sloth bears. resplendenceceylon.com; from \$470.

Siberia Hard-core wildlife fans will love **Natural World Safaris'** trip to track Siberian tigers in Russia's far east. With only around 400 of the cats left, guests help collect data on population and other key indicators. naturalworldsafaris.com; seven days from \$3,175.

Nepal Though better known for towering peaks than big game, Nepal is home to a thriving population of Indian rhinos, as well as elephants and Bengal tigers. A stay at Taj Safaris' **Meghauri Serai** lodge, on the edge of Chitwan National Park, will get you up close to all of them. tajhotels.com; from \$544. — SARAH KHAN

