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Issue 4 - 2011

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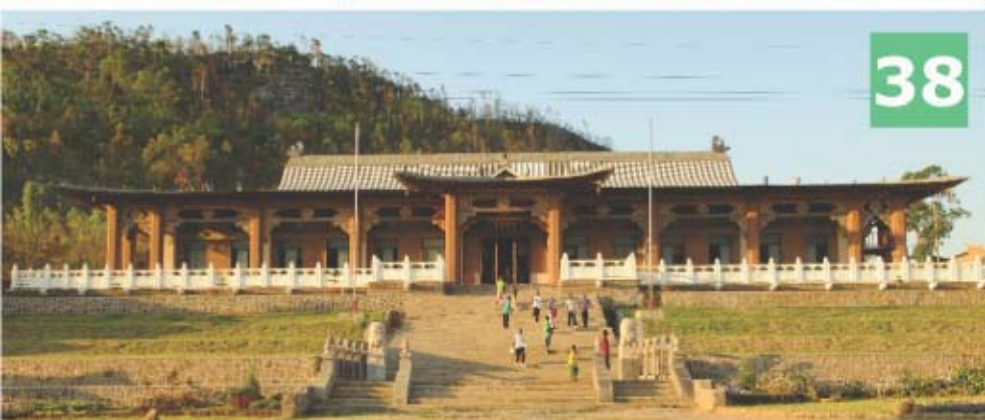
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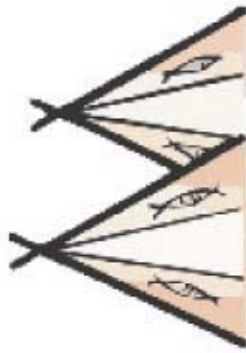


Publishers' Info

Be My Guest is a publication of the Be My Guest partnership group:

Joke van Kampen	Editor
Arjen van de Merwe	Photo Editor
Tom M'mangeni	Sales Marketing & Distribution
Charlet Communications	Design and Layout

Write to us at: PO Box E199, Blantyre
 Email: bemyguest@africamail.com For inquiries on
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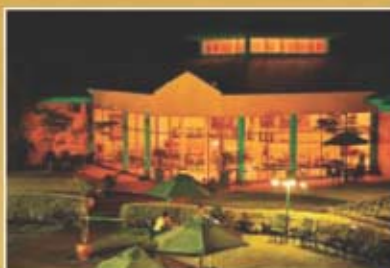


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Be *My* Guest

Malawi's tourism magazine

Welcome to the 4th issue of Be My Guest.

Our first year of existence has gone by in a flash. Malawi is a fantastic country to spend your holiday in since everything that you would want is there, relatively close by; wildlife, adventure, beach, culture. We are happy to observe that the tourism sector is attempting to improve constantly. New possibilities are offered all the time, in this issue we pay attention to the introduction of sky diving in Malawi and to the establishing of a real Spa at the Lake.

Meanwhile the Ministry of Tourism has started an exercise to rate the hotels in Malawi with stars to make it easier for visitors to choose the accommodation they want.

The airports in both Lilongwe and Blantyre have been renovated and are now substantially more efficient and comfortable. Air Malawi carries you to either Blantyre or Lilongwe from South Africa on a daily bases.

One of the unique features of Malawi is its bird life and in this issue we visit one of the least known but best places for bird watching, Lake Chilwa.

We also had a look at Likoma island, not the easiest place to get to but a real paradise once you are there.

We hope that you are willing to share your Malawi experience with us, by sending your best Malawi photographs to us. Look at the photo contest pages 50 and 51.

And please do use the vouchers in this issue, our advertisers are happy to give you a discount, and look out for our next issue.

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BE MY GUEST is a magazine aimed at contributing to the growth of the tourism industry of Malawi.

It will be published 4 times a year and distributed in a circulation of 7000 copies for free to: Relevant tourism operators in South Africa and elsewhere. Lodges, hotels and other tourist destinations in Malawi to be distributed to the rooms.

Be My Guest is available at:
A.C Opticals, La Caverna, Social Gathering places and All Executive Offices in Malawi
Air Malawi offices abroad
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Harvey World Travel in South Africa

Be My Guest can be found on board Air Malawi flights and on all flights of Nyassa Air Taxis.

This issue of Be My Guest will also be distributed in London, courtesy of the organisers of the Lake of Stars.

Tourism in Malawi has potential that has not been used to the full. One of the reasons for that is that potential clients and markets do not have materials available to attract the public to visit Malawi.

Be My Guest intends to fill that gap by making material on Malawi and the possibilities in Malawi available to potential visitors: first and foremost the clients of South African tour and travel organisers.

Be My Guest is being published by an international partnership where Malawian creativity and skills and international experience and perspective has been brought together in order to guarantee a high quality publication.

The editorial content will pay attention to everything that is of interest to the potential visitor:
accommodation, food, nature and environment, culture
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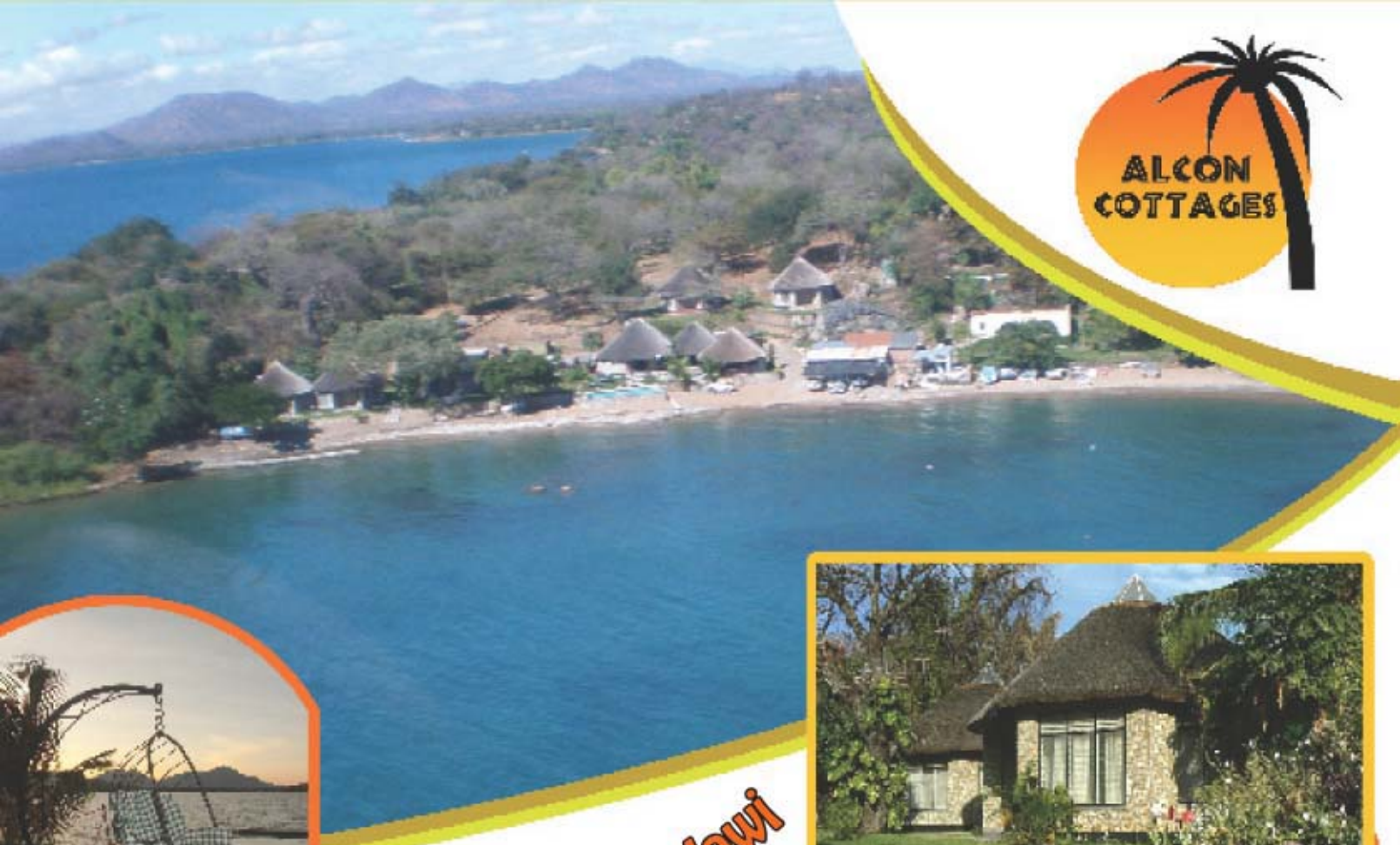
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LIKOMA ISLAND

The beaches on Likoma are splendid, there are baobabs and mango trees everywhere and the small town of Chipiyela has a lively market.

It is not really easy to get there but it is worth the effort. Splendid beaches, luxury pampering, great food and beautiful nature, Likoma is a small pearl in Lake Malawi.

There are only two ways to get to Likoma Island in Lake Malawi, 8000 inhabitants, 8 km long, 3 km wide. You either take the Ilala, motor vessel that crosses the lake every week. The Ilala leaves on Friday from Monkey Bay and arrives at Likoma on Sunday afternoon. On Tuesday morning the Ilala stops again at Likoma, to be back in Monkey Bay on Thursday afternoon. The other possibility is a flight by Nyassa Air Taxi's.

Likoma lays in Mozambique waters but it has always been part of Malawi. In the 1880's it became the headquarters of the Anglican Church in Malawi. The isolation of the island protected the missionaries against attacks from the Ngoni and Yao tribes

that clashed with the missionaries in Malawi in those days.

Between 1903 and 1905 a cathedral was build by a trained architect (Frank George) with local materials. The cathedral is ridiculously big for an island like this with a population of 8000 but it is beautiful building. There are soapstone choir stalls, the stain glass windows are beautiful and the arches and cloisters used bricks made on the island. Mud from anthills was used as mortar.

The beaches on Likoma are splendid, there are baobab's and mango trees everywhere and the small town of Chipiyela has a lively market.





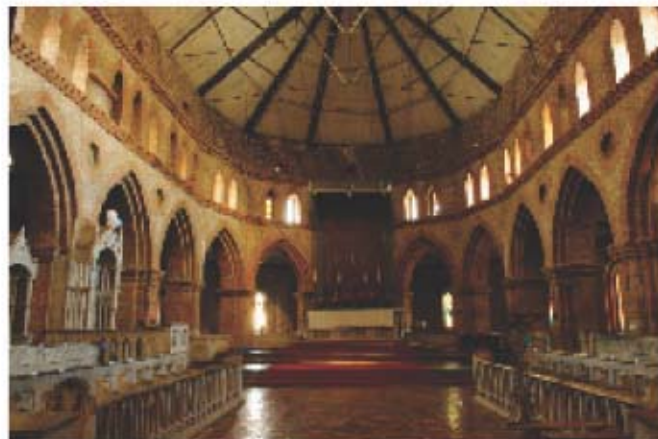
It took the owners seven years to build the place and it shows.

There are a few places to stay on Likoma.

Kaya Mawa (which means maybe tomorrow) is an upmarket lodge. It took the owners seven years to build the place and it shows. All rooms have a view of the lake, the design of the chalets and the rooms is stunning. Every room has its own deck with comfortable chairs and a view on the lakeshore of Mozambique. There is a honeymoon suite on a little island just in front of Kaya Mawa.

All sorts of water sports are provided. The restaurant on the beach is not only a romantic setting; the food that is served here can compete with any top restaurant anywhere. Dinner is served on the beach in a private spot. The wine list is long and the candles light the exquisite dishes.

Kaya Mawa works closely together with a local workshop on Likoma where all the lovely bedding, curtains, etc. is made. Wherever in Malawi you see



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Wherever in Malawi you see the cushion covers with the shells in off white colours, it comes from Likoma.

the cushion covers with the shells in off white colours, it comes from Likoma. Apart from the artsy stuff they also make beds on request.

This is just one of the ways Kaya Mawa contributes to the local economy.

The other possibility to stay is Mango Drift. This is the other end of the spectre. Real backpacker's hub. Bar on the beach, bamboo cottages, camp side also on the beach. Prices that will allow you to stay for a long time, eating the fish that you have caught yourself, watching the weavers building a city in the tree behind the bar, and exchanging travel tips with your fellow guests.



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Sabbatini's Castle

Kate Evans passed the Castle that stands right outside Blantyre and wonders how this outlandish building came about in rural Malawi. She did the research and found out for us.

It was my first week in Malawi when new found friends offered to take me with them to Zomba. We set off, navigating the bumpy-potholed Blantyre-Zomba road. We were only a few kilometers outside of Blantyre when my friend said to me, "we're coming up on Macaroni's castle" and pointed out the window to the left. I looked, trying to see past the heavy gate and large trees with their rainy-season foliage. I'm not sure what I expected to see, but there, nestled in the middle of suburban Blantyre, was a real and true castle. It rose at least four stories and had three red brick turreted towers. It seemed so massive and out of place on the back roads of Malawi. I asked my friend the story behind this mysterious castle, to which she shrugged and said she wasn't sure, but she thought "some crazy Italian built it at the turn of the century."

The castle captured my imagination. Who was the Italian who had come to the remote bush-land of early 20th century Malawi to build a red brick castle?

I started with the Society of Malawi archives, where I learned that Sabbatini's Castle was built by Alberto Sabbatini who arrived in Malawi in 1904. Details about his past are sketchy but it seems he hailed from Villa Fortana and sailed into Port Herald (modern-day Nsanje) with six pence in his pocket. He is described as a "charming, innovative, endlessly resourceful man," who purchased Mapanga, the land outside of Blantyre, in 1906. He soon began constructing his mansion, one complete with turreted towers

and a cypress avenue. He became one of the most successful farmers of the era, selling £32,500 sterling worth of tobacco in 1920. Sabbatini, an innovator, invested in sisal, cement, and even wanted to start a steamer service in the lower Shire. Despite his forward thinking, he lost almost everything in the tobacco crash and by 1939, he was forced to sell his estate.

From there the story of Sabbatini's castle continues. A British couple bought the estate and leased it to the Government who used it as an internment camp for 'enemies of Britain' during World War II. Italians, Austrians, Germans, etc. were rounded up and spent the duration of the war in the gardens and castle of Sabbatini's estate.

Despite the castle's firm position in Malawian history, despite its beauty, and despite its distinctiveness, today it sits in ruins. Fire and lack of care have deteriorated the home so that it is now just a shell. Despite its ruined state, or perhaps because of it, rumors still swirl about the Castle and its former inhabitants. In the course of my research I heard tales of underground tunnels and dungeons, and skeletons. Whether there is truth in these rumors remains to be seen, but the Castle's eerie emptiness continues to spark one's imagination. One hopes that while the castle itself may not be salvageable, the myths surrounding it will keep us wondering about its history and the lives it affected.



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EARLY AND UNFORGETTABLE LAKE CHILWA

Many excellent destinations for visitors are not really very well known and not widely advertised. Lake Chilwa is one of the really nice places to visit for stunning bird life and a quiet boat ride.

You have to be there at 6.30 on Saturday morning. Fishing village Kachulu is almost 30 km from Zomba town. Kachulu is a friendly little village at Lake Chilwa, the southernmost of Malawi's many lakes. It is a big lake, 650 km². The size of the lake is changing almost every month, in relation to rainfall and evaporation.

There are many fishing communities around the lake but most fishermen also grow maize and other food crops on the shores. In years of disappointing harvests, the communities used to turn to bird hunting on the lake

*Showing the birds
to visitors instead of
hunting them.*





to complement both their diet and their income. But nowadays instead of going bird hunting, they organise boat tours on the lake to show the birds to tourists and other visitors. They are trained to do so by the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi and they can tell quite a lot about the many, many species living on these wetlands. Lake Chilwa is a bird watcher's paradise in a country that has many great places for bird watching to begin with.

In the early morning Lake Chilwa has an unworldly atmosphere with mist hanging over the water, reed on all the sides. Mount Mulanje and the Zomba plateau are visible, towering above the lake in the orange sky of the morning.

The little fishing boat is quietly sliding through the water, which these days is never deeper than three meters. Lake Chilwa is a natural depression filled with rainwater, and continues to get smaller.

David Livingstone reported the lake to run towards the foothills of Mount Mulanje (in 1859), which is almost 30

*An unworldly atmosphere
with mist hanging over
the water.....*





km further south than it is today. And birds are there, everywhere; there are ibises, herons, egrets, hornbills, Egyptian ducks, pelicans, jacanas, all sorts of kingfishers and many more.

Henry, our captain who has picked us up from the village Kachulu, tells stories about life on the shores of Lake Chilwa. We reached his boat after a lovely walk through the fields with maize, tomatoes, cassava and other crops, being greeted by the villagers who are already up for some time.

After a little tour through the vast reeds the lake is laying in front of the boat, in all its early morning glory. The jacana walks over the water as jacana's do, the ducks seem to be busy with something, the kingfishers fish and a group of herons is flying

above us. The silence is only broken by the sound of the birds; there are no other boats out at the moment.

No photograph can adequately describe the atmosphere of Lake Chilwa, so very different from its sister Lake Malawi with its beaches and beach life.

Shortly after 10 we are back in Kachulu. Bonus; on the way back to Zomba you have a view of the Zomba plateau that you have nowhere else.

Lake Chilwa: Very well worth to get out of bed in the middle of the night. The Wildlife and Enviromental Society of Malawi organises the boat trips on request. Henry is waiting for you in Kachulu: 0999 740 815.

*The silence is only
broken by the sound
of birds.*



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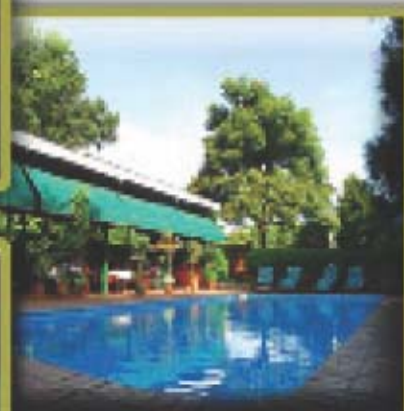
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"Malawi is ready for extreme sports" says Honourable Ken Lipenga, Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture. In a minute he is to go up to 8000 feet, jump out of the airplane, and make a free fall of about 25 seconds, before the parachute opens, and he'll land on the beach at Mangochi to open the Lake of Stars Festival in a spectacular way.

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Just a few weeks before, Daniel and Barbara of Nyassa Air Taxi had made the first skydive in Malawi in over 40 years. After a thorough preparation to make sure it was safe and legal, they jumped at Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe, for a crowd of officials and on lookers, to start a new chapter in sports in Malawi.

Sky diving is not for the faint hearted, it takes a special mindset to enjoy stepping out of an airplane at several kilometres height, and experience the elements in such an extreme way. When I spoke to Daniel about this article he offered me a jump. When I told him I'm too scared he laughed whole

Sky diving is not for the faint hearted.



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heartedly. But the real aficionados will go to great lengths to experience the thrill. One jumper travelled all the way from England to jump over Lake Malawi, and get a unique view of this tourist attraction.

At the Lake of Stars weekend the sport was not only within reach of the trained and experienced: everyone can do it, in a tandem jump. The client is hooked onto an experienced tandem master, who will make sure the jump is safe, and without any training: off you go. Some six people step into a light aircraft, and enjoy the anticipation while they climb up to the required

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altitude over a half hour or so. The excitement builds up, but once you've taken off there is no turning back. The door opens and a peak experience is yours. Every jumper ensured me they'll never forget the feeling. That does not mean there are no second thoughts. One beginner said from the plane, as they were about to take off: why am I doing this? The tandem master had his answer ready: This will be your best experience this year with your clothes on.



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SUNBIRD

Sunbird Lilongwe:

This is the most no nonsense hotel of the Sunbird family. It is located in the hearth of the Old Town of Lilongwe, walking distance from Mama Mia's restaurant, on Kamuzu Procession Road. There is a business centre, and the 94 rooms have DSTV, room service and air conditioning. The terrace along the swimming pool makes a nice place to have a business lunch and different conference and meeting rooms are available.

Sunbird Livingstonia Beach:

Built in the 1930s Sunbird Livingstonia Beach Hotel in Senga Bay has a distinct colonial style to it. From the time it was called the Grand Beach Hotel date the central buildings with high ceilings and typical colonial furniture. Other elements are more modern.

Its location is unprecedented, 1 km of private beach stretches in front of the hotel. Livingstonia has rooms and a couple of rondavels, directly at the beach. The rondavels are somewhat apart and therefore very private. The standard rooms as well as the rondavels and the suites are very nicely decorated with mostly local materials, fabric and art.

The restaurant on the first floor of the main building, overlooking the lake, is used to serve lavish breakfast buffets. Lunch and dinner are often also served on the terrace (if the weather permits). It is on that terrace that one would like to spend a lazy Sunday afternoon with friends or family, staring at the lake, enjoying the local music that is being played on weekends, talking and enjoying the food and drinks. The immaculate garden is a pleasure to walk in, towards the building with the suites there is a tent where one can get a massage. Recently Livingstonia added a well equipped gym to its facilities.

The swimming pool in Livingstonia is great; it is huge and therefore very good for real swimming. There is a tennis court and a hotel shop with postcards and souvenirs.

Livingstonia hotel also has a good camp site called Steps. It has its own stretch of beach; apart from the sign at the entrance is it invisible from the hotel.

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HALF-DAY DAR ES SALAAM CITY TOUR

Raised from the humble surroundings of a Fishing village just over a century ago, Dar es Salaam blossomed into one of the most beautiful seaside capitals. Many beautiful and unspoilt beaches are easy reach of Dar es Salaam, literally translated as "The Heaven of Peace." Our most popular excursion in the city for tourists in transit en route to the game parks of the north or south, or for business clients with some leisure time is the half-day Dar es Salaam City Tour.

Here is a sample of the sights and sounds you will experience during the tour:

Mnazi moja Park: this is near Jamhuri and Uhuru Streets. Seen on the side is the Uhuru Torch Monument erected to symbolize the Freedom Torch placed at the peak of Mt. Kilimanjaro upon Tanzania's attainment of independence. On the other side of the park is the Republic Fountain, which commemorated the foundation of the republic in 1962.

Kariakoo Market: this beautiful market has an interesting local colour and a diversity of people as well as exotic fruits, fresh fish, food products, hand crafts, local textile material and many locally made products. The market's colour, charm and character make it a must visitor. **EXCITE.**

University: the university is superbly laid out amidst lawns and gardens on the Ubungu Observation Hill, some 14km away from the city. The hill offers magnificent open view of Dar es Salaam city. The main campus area is built on three low hills, well wooded with cashew trees.

Village museum: this is 10km along Bagamoyo Road and has a collection of authentically constructed traditional houses of various Tanzanian tribes. It displays several distinct architectural styles with building materials ranging from sand, grass and poles to mud and rocks. Villagers demonstrate their ancient skills of carving and weaving and offer their products for sale.

House of crafts (Nyumba ya sanasas): Near the heart of Dar es Salaam there is a unique centre of creating and selling Tanzanian arts and crafts. Many of the artists working here have developed their talents through training which enabled them to transform traditional materials, designs and motifs into contemporary forms. At 'Nyumba ya Sanaa', one finds many exciting creative activities to become absorbed in like painting, drawing, figurative wax batik and etching. Carvings of ebony



Africa Hotel

are made as well as jewellery, ceramic and 'tie-and-dye' dresses for men, women and children.

National museum: The outstanding attraction is the Hall of Man where Dr. Leakey's finds from Olduvai Gorge including the skull of Nutcrackerman (*Zinjanthropus*) and other human fossils are displayed. The Museum offers an outstanding ethnographic collection of tribal ornaments, headdresses, witchcraft paraphernalia and traditional musical instruments collected from various regions in Tanzania. Also, the history of the East African Coast is well portrayed with Chinese porcelain glazed pottery, trade wide beads from India and a series of copper coins from the Sultan of Kilwa

State house: The state house accommodates the office of the president. It has an ornate structure reflecting a blend of African and Arabic architecture, partly built on the foundation of the old German Palace in 1922.

Hotel	Package Price		
	Single	Double	Child
New Africa Hotel	968.00	736.00	489.00
Peacock Hotel	924.00	712.00	445.00

Includes:

Return air ticket Blantyre/Lilongwe – Dar es Salaam – Blantyre/Lilongwe

Transfer; airport – hotel – airport

4 nights on bed and breakfast at a chosen hotel

Half day Dar es Salaam City Tour (Mnazi moja park, Kariakoo market, University, Village museum, House of Crafts, National museum, State house)

Excludes :

Taxes on air ticket

Meals not mentioned in inclusions above

All expense of a personal nature; telephone bills, laundry etc

Notes

Rates are per person in USD

Rates are subject to change without prior notification

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PLAYING THE RIGHT MUSIC AT THE RIGHT PLACE, CHECHAMBA: MUSIC SINCE 1930

"I was born in Zimbabwe but my parents are from Zomba and I lived all my life here so I consider myself a Malawian."

I did not decide to become a musician, music came my way from a very young age, I wrote my first song in Kindergarten.

At secondary school we did music and there was a teacher who had a guitar who I regularly visited.

I went into the army to become a soldier but I ended up in the army band. I played tenor saxophone. Malawi was still British at the time and we did all the usual stuff: Kings African Rifles, the National Anthem. We would perform at parades, government functions, at government house. And for the soldiers to have a good time, we played dance music.

When my father died I could buy a big set of band equipment with acoustic instruments. I found my own musicians and trained them. I had a job at the Nyasaland Railways and we were organising shows all over the country. There was scarcely any entertainment at the time. There was a wind up gramophone here or there but not much else. We organised dances, played African music that we copied from the few gramophone records we could get. Many people went to South Africa for work and they brought back music that we copied. South Africans were not allowed in European society so they developed their own stuff. We were asked to play European music for a fat cheque which was of course very tempting.

We were on the road like pop stars, working the few clubs that were there: Ryall's, Shire Highlands, the Flamingo Night Club, and the Blantyre Country Club.

In 1960 the King of Jazz, Louis Armstrong played here and from that time on we had access to much more music from all over.

MBC (Malawi Broadcasting Corporation) got wind instruments donated by the German government but nobody could train the musicians to play them, so I did that for some time.

In 1969 the Mount Soche Hotel was built and they wanted musicians on a regular basis. I was inspired to play the piano by three guys from Zimbabwe, they played so well, and they could do medleys all night long. In 1980 I stopped playing saxophone and concentrated on the piano from then on.

I have always played a lot of American jazz. I regard it as first class, it has African roots, it fits me. I am a fan of Paul Desmond and Dave Brubeck. But I like to listen to all kinds of music from spirituals to dance to classic. It is all about the right music at the right place. I am involving Malawian beats. Sometimes it sounds like a waltz or a bolero, but it is a Malawian beat.

I also have a music school. You need to study in order to become a good musician. What is lacking in Malawi is exposure to good performances, how do you get inspired without it?

We have to raise the standards in music. The audience should be more demanding, they should force the musicians the study, both the theory and the practice.

Chechamba is playing every Friday night in the Michiru Restaurant at the Mount Soche Hotel in Blantyre.



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2011 HIGHLIGHTS

NYASSA Air Taxi



Following are some of the highlights that our team is working on for the 2011 flying season, to make flying even more attractive to our travellers in Malawi and Zambia.

Fleet

We keep our diverse fleet with 3-9 passenger seats to ensure we have the best option available to you. Three out of our six aircraft will undergo substantial improvements. They will be fitted with new engines, state of the art avionics, interior and exterior refurbishment. With the addition of a larger aircraft to our fleet we are now more flexible with weights and group sizes.

Shuttle Service

To ease bookings and ensure smooth travel Nyassa Air Taxi is offering daily charters to Mfuwe and 4 weekly charters to Likoma. These flights connect with international flights to and from Lilongwe. Due to increasing passenger numbers and set departure times we are able to reduce the prices on these routes substantially.

Mfuwe

We'll have daily flights between Mfuwe and Lilongwe during the whole year of 2011 at substantially reduced prices. This makes Lilongwe an attractive entry point for the South Luangwa Park. The same carriers flying into Lusaka also serve Lilongwe (SA, KQ, ET) at the same price. Your clients can book open jaw flights (i.e. arrive at Lilongwe and depart after their safari from Livingstone or Lusaka) without any premium. Our connection times at Lilongwe are minimal, but should inbound flights be delayed we wait for your clients.

Advantages

- > no passenger departure tax in transit
- > short transfer and connection times
- > our aircraft waits if incoming carrier is delayed
- > daily departures
- > reduced prices
- > open jaw flights reduce passenger transfer costs and times

Likoma

To bring down prices by 25% we offer four shuttles on the days when most international carriers serve Lilongwe (Tue/Thu/Fri/Sun). Outside these times charters are available at a small premium. All shuttles connect seamless with international flights at Lilongwe and our flights to Mfuwe.

Advantages

- > short transfer and connection times
- > our aircraft waits if incoming carrier is delayed
- > reduced prices
- > four flights per week

We at Nyassa Air Taxi are excited about next years developments and look forward to your patronage during 2011.

The Nyassa Team





BODY AND SOUL

Know that mood? Super relaxed, refreshed, light, at peace with yourself and the rest of the world? It is how you feel if you come back from a really nice treatment in a good Spa.

Now you can have that experience in Malawi as well, at the prime location on the grounds of Club Makokola at the beach, just out of Mangochi.

The Lake Spa opened its doors just a few months ago and it really is a good addition to the possibilities for visitors.

This Lake Spa is a very special one. They use indigenous plant ingredients so you can choose a baobab wrap or a Marula massage. A Tamarind, Lime or Ginger glow and many things more.

The staff at the Lake Spa is trained in massage techniques, facials and body works from all over the world, such as Thailand, Egypt (foot reflexiology), Hot stone massage and African massage. All very exotic but the truth is that laying in their open treatment rooms with a view on a lovely garden is special.

Being pampered is probably the word to describe what is happening at the Lake Spa.

At the end of your treatment the Jacuzzi is waiting for you to sit in, stare out over the garden, think about nothing and promise yourself to do this more often.

The Lake Spa is open daily, do not miss it.



MAJETE WILDLIFE RESERVE

BRINGING BACK PART OF OUR HERITAGE



For that special combination of majestic scenery and rich wildlife, there's nowhere quite like Majete Wildlife Reserve.

Superbly situated in the Lower Shire Valley, at the southern extent of the Great Rift Valley, our Reserve is home to a variety of interesting wildlife including rhino and sable. But, for many visitors, the elephants of Majete will be a major draw. Recently, the reserve became a new home for more than 80 elephants, relocated from Mangochi with assistance from the International Fund for Animal Welfare.

HELPING THE COMMUNITY

Some 130,000 people live in the vicinity of the Majete reserve and our Community Development Section

works with local communities on key projects such as boreholes, school classrooms, health clinics and drinking troughs for livestock.

WHERE TO STAY

Thawale Camp has six twin-tented chalets, including one luxury chalet, all en-suite and overlooking a floodlit waterhole that attracts a variety of wildlife. There is a lounge area with a bar, a dining area and a terrace. Fully catered meals are provided including traditional Malawi dishes.

Also located within the reserve is a self-catering Community Campsite.



FIRST OF ITS KIND

Majete Wildlife Reserve is part of the African Parks Network – the first private park management institution in Africa – which manages protected areas in partnership with governments.



MAJETE WILDLIFE RESERVE

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NIHA Instead of MULI BWANJI?

The expanding presence of China in Africa is visible all over the continent and Malawi is no exception since the country changed diplomatic ties from Taiwan to China. China does in Malawi what they do everywhere in Africa, building, road construction, trade and Aid.

On the road from Blantyre to Zomba, just after the Chiradzulu turn off, there is a different kind of Chinese presence.

After 1,5 km over a dusty road one enters a complex that is dominated by a huge Buddhist Temple.

Here is Amitofo, an orphanage where 200 children live. The temple has the Buddha statue and the calm and contemplative atmosphere that characterizes Buddhist

Temples all over the world.

The children at Amitofo go to school and learn Chinese. The orphanage is in the process of building a secondary school and the foundation is creating opportunities for elder children to be able to study in China. All the children learn Chinese and they eat nsima with chop sticks.

Within 10 or 15 years Malawi will have a group of young professionals with excellent career opportunities



because they can effectively broker between Malawi and China and Chinese people in Malawi.

The children also practice Kung Fu dancing and they are amazingly good at it. Recently they gave breathtaking shows at the Lake of Stars and at other occasions. They practice hard at it, every day and it shows. Impossible poses, high jumps, concentrated and focussed, this show is high level -art.



They practice hard at it.





Visitors are welcome at Amitofo, so go and sit in the quiet of the temple for a while or see the children practice Kung-Fu.

Do not forget; It costs 3000 Malawi Kwacha to pay for the food for one child for a month and 15000 Malawi Kwacha to cover for all the other expenses. So find that donation box.



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Although in the heart of town the lodge is set within beautiful and tranquil gardens, visited by a host of birdlife.

Our restaurant offers fine dining with a Mediterranean flair in the evening. Casa Mia is ideally situated for a quick business lunch or just a lazy afternoon at the veranda. The conference room can cater up to 80 delegates.

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City Life

No, cities are not the reason that you visit Malawi. But you probably will spend some time in either Blantyre or Lilongwe or both anyway. The good news is that both cities have something to offer in terms of food, accommodation and shops. Some very nice things actually. Come and have a look and a bite and a bed



Crossroads Hotel Beauty Salon

Best way to spend the last day of your holiday; facial, massage, manicure, hair dresser, pedicure or more along the same lines. In Lilongwe the Crossroads Hotel has a fine beauty salon, just behind the swimming pool with everything mentioned above available. They use Clarin's products, delivered to you with the usual Malawian friendly attention and care.

Korea Garden Lodge

Long time favourite of the Aid and international NGO scene, the Korea Garden Lodge provides large rooms, DSTV, Internet and room service for a very reasonable price. Swimming pool with a terrace where many deals are being sealed, restaurant with Korean/Asian food, conveniently located in the old town near the golf club of Lilongwe. Just a comfortable place to stay for a good price.





Mama Mia

Long before the infamous musical took shape, the restaurant was there. Excellent Italian food made for you by Italian chef Salvatore. The patio with its plants is a lovely place to sit and enjoy it. Pizzas the way pizzas should be; thin and crispy, pasta the way you get it in Tuscany, al dente and home made. Try the innovative antipasto and the delicious cheese platter. And everything else, really. Next door within the shopping mall is an Italian deli where you can buy some ingredients to try it at home. The place has a good lunch menu and fab ice cream.



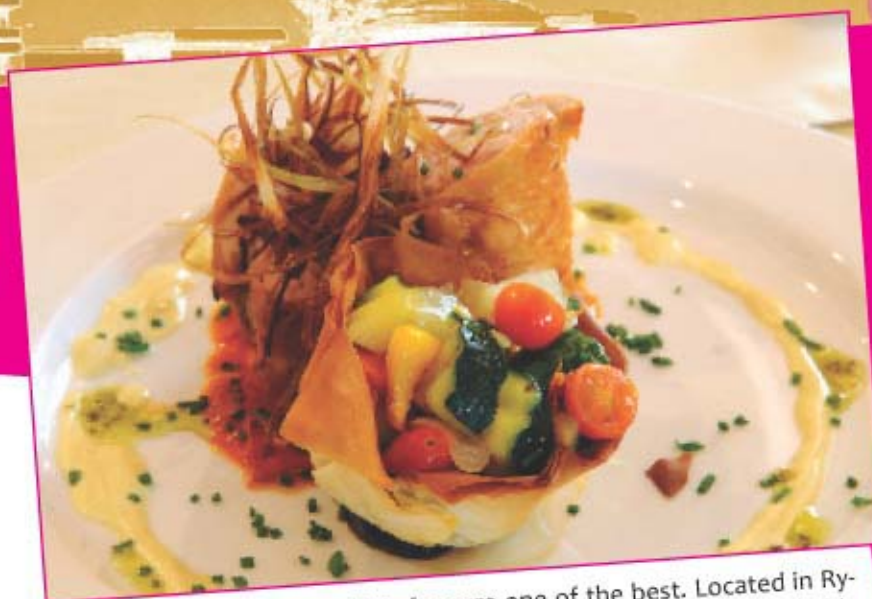
Book Mart

You never have enough, unless you own one of those ultra modern electronic devices on which you can store hundreds of books AND you have electricity throughout your holiday.

For all other creatures, stop at the Book Market, the shop is located at the Kamuzu Procession Road, between Lilongwe Hotel and Crossroads shopping centre.

Take some time; they really have a great selection of classics, new literature, old timers and books that you won't find anywhere else. Everything is really cheap, so you do not have to bother about carrying the books all the way home after you have read them.

Grill 21



Must be one of the oldest restaurants of Blantyre and it is for sure one of the best. Located in Ryalls Hotel with a bar that looks like an old English men's club attached. The restaurant is stylishly furnished, the atmosphere is classy. But you come here really for the food. A South African chef makes you a different Thai spring role, a great carpaccio, a mouth-watering tomato soup, beautifully designed salads that are little pieces of art to look at, let alone to eat. Keep some space for the Dusty Road dessert. Don't forget to look at the historic photographs in the hallway.



Blue Elephant

Where else would you spend a Friday night? Bar, with big TV screens, and all drinks you can think of (including cocktails with those weird names such as sex on the beach). Long tables outside, food available, live music on certain evenings. It is the Blue Elephant that colleagues go to after work, where friends meet, where you go alone to meet new friends. Always crowded on weekend evenings, open late, and home of the party crowd. If you want to rub elbows with the young professional middle class of Blantyre, this is the place to go.



Crystal Florist

Market every last Saturday of the month, plant nursery and florist. Crystal sells many things more such as vases, garden tools, and various gifts. It is one of the few places where you can buy fresh flowers, Crystal can turn them into beautiful bouquets for you. Need a gift for the family that invited you to their home for dinner? Want to say goodbye to a newfound friend with flowers? Need flowers to warm the hearth of someone? Crystal is the place, located opposite the Ryall's Hotel.

Annie's Lodge

New in Blantyre but old timer in both Lilongwe (in two locations) and Zomba (with a lodge and a restaurant).

It is located in Nyambadwe, signposted on Chileka road. What makes Annie's Lodge popular is the value for money that it provides. In plain English, Annie's Lodge is cheap for what it offers; quite nice rooms, a restaurant with fairly good food. The new one in Blantyre is quietly located but still close to the Central Business District.



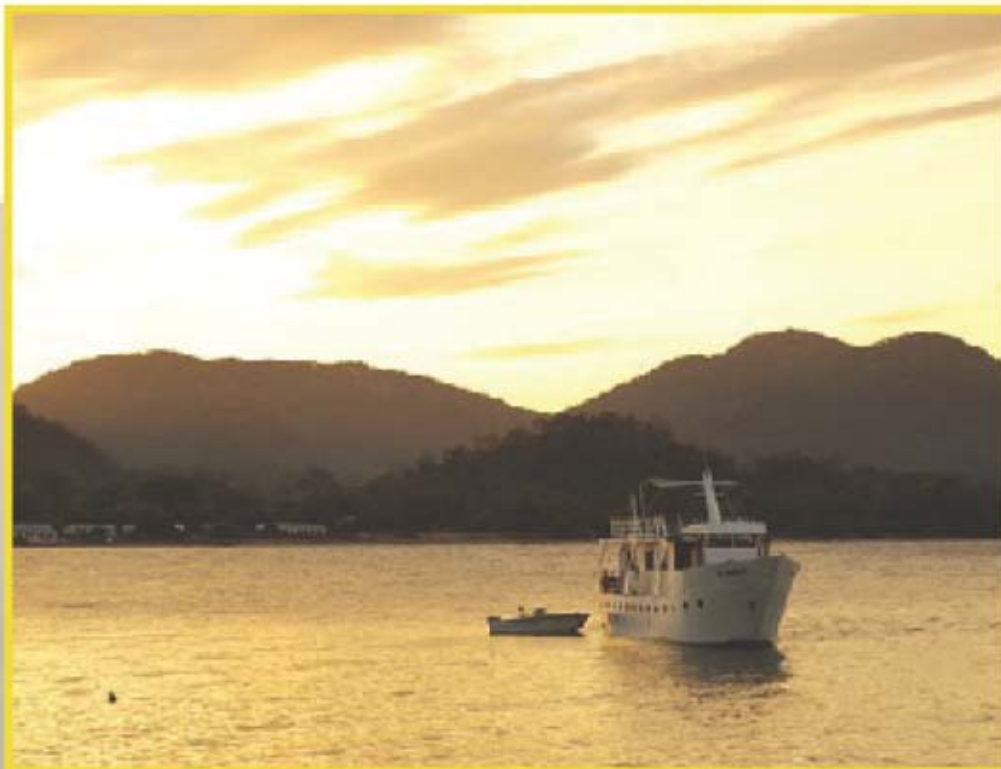
Cruise through Liwonde National Park and into Lake Malawi with CRUISE MALAWI ON THE MV MANGUNDA



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ITINERARY 1

Depart from Liwonde Bridge and cruise through Liwonde National Park. First night is spent anchored on Lake Malombe. Early start northwards and arrive at Club Makokola late morning and spend the rest of the day and night there. 26th December – Depart from Club Makokola northwards again. Arrive at in Chirombo Bay at Alcon Cottages late morning. After lunch disembark and cruise ends.



ITINERARY 2

Depart from Alcon Cottages heading south and overnight anchored off Club Makokola and spend the night. Head south and stop for the night on Lake Malombe. South some more through Liwonde National park and arrive at the Liwonde Bridge early afternoon and disembark after lunch and cruise ends

Rates

USD390.00 (K60,450.00) per person one way (2 nights / 3 days), minimum of 4 people

USD320.00 (K49,600.00) per person one way (2 nights / 3 days), group of 8 people

Rates include – full board (breakfast, lunch, dinner & tea/coffee), activities on offer and all taxes

Rates exclude – drinks, extra meals, activities not offered by MV Mangunda and items of a personal nature.

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The 7th Lake of Stars festival took place in Mangochi 15,16,17, October 2010.

It was hot in many respects, the temperature higher than usual in this time of the year, hot with many star performances and hot with an audience including every last cool person in Malawi.

2010's festival featured the best line up yet, with more than 50 Malawian acts and over 20 artists from Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Australia, Burundi and the UK, giving the 3000-strong audience a weekend of foot-stomping, soul-cleansing entertainment.

There were many great moments; however one of the weekend's highlights was Oliver Mtukudzi's performance on Friday night. Speaking after his performance, Mtukudzi said: "This was my best performance in Malawi yet - will do it again."

The festival would not have been complete without the incredible performances of a record number of Malawian stars including Young Kay, Dan Lu, Tigris, Rina, Dikamawoko arts, Agorosso and Peter Mawanga among many more talented local artists.

During the festival, poet Q Malewezi performed his poems for an enthusiastic audience and Theatre group Nanzikambe gave a performance, challenging and questioning aspects of what is often seen as Malawian culture in a clownish way.

According to Hip Hop Queen Rina the festival was "extremely beneficial to the youngsters as it gave them their first ever opportunity to showcase their talents on a global platform at an international festival right on their doorstep."

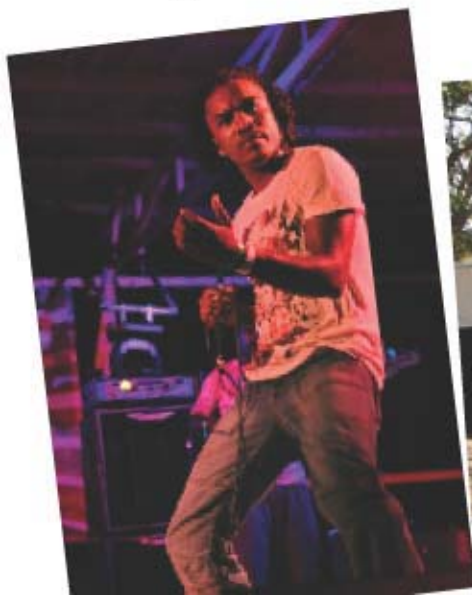
Echoing these sentiments UK-based Malawian artist Mwai-Hazel of Khandi Floss was both impressed and honoured to be a part of this festival which is "pioneering Malawian music at its embryonic stage" and hopes the Lake of Stars Festival will continue to inspire and engage itself with local talent towards a more stable and recognisable music industry in Malawi. "We already have the talent we just need to build it together."

Festival Director Tom Porter stated that this year "we are particularly proud of the engagement and support from the local community of Chipoka and Mangochi, who participated in many of the activities which took place around the festival."

"With artists and media undertaking visits to local development programmes, guests are exposed to a side of the community not represented by the festival. It also gives local organisations the opportunity to approach potential partners through this media exposure," says Porter.

The festival attracted media attention both from local radio stations as well as from international media such as CNN, BBC and others.

The Lake of Stars will be continued; Be My Guest will inform you on where and when.





Be *My* Guest

photo contest

Thank you very much for sending us your photographs. We got a few more submissions than the previous time. And that made our job as a jury more difficult. There were a lot of great photos there. And in most we saw the joy of travelling. After serious consideration we decided that the ship Ilala at sunset by Elsbeth Robson deserved the highest honour. There's beauty, wonderful colours, and the Ilala does nothing but travel. Congratulations.

Then there were some more photos we should show you:

Honourable mentions for the deckchairs of Thomas Spiekermann. Well framed in the doorway, we feel the joy of sitting down and enjoying the view.

Sunset at Namaso Bay by Carlos Quiroga is really beautiful, though there is not much travelling there.

congratulations!



Winner: Ilala at sunset by Elsbeth Robson.

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TALK
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THE TOWN



ABOVE: Sunset at Namaso Bay
by Carlos Quiroga

RIGHT:
Deckchairs of Thomas Spiekermann.
Well framed in the doorway

Again we really enjoyed seeing your submissions. Let's do it again. For next time the theme will be "My best moment". Show us your photos from Malawi, and let us share in your best moment. You decide which moment is best. The prize will be a CD by Chechamba, the musician we interviewed in this issue. And please: we can do with even more submissions than this time, so keep them coming at bemyguest@africamail.com



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A message from the Director of Tourism

Warm and hearty welcome from Malawi, the warm heart of Africa, the Land of smiles. First and foremost, the Department of Tourism is delighted to be associated with Be My Guest Magazine. My office has been following the Be My Guest Magazine closely since its first issue of December 2009 and we have built confidence in the Magazine that indeed the contents have touristic value.

Malawi has great touristic potential that we aim to develop to become one of the leading eco-tourism destinations in Africa Malawi has it all. From the golden sandy beaches, fresh water lakes and rivers, the scenic and idyllic Mount Mulanje, the abundant wildlife and game in our wildlife reserves to world heritage sites, human cradle and dinosaur remains. To crown it all...we are the friendliest people on earth hence the accolade "the warm heart of Africa". Our people are warm, gentle, polite, friendly and always eager to give a helping hand. Malawi is a politically stable country with no history of wars and conflicts, the Peace Index for 2008 put Malawi as the second peaceful nation in Africa after Botswana! The Malawi tourism industry continues to show positive growth over the last five years. International visitors arose from 437, 718 in 2005 to around 750, 000 in 2009, an average annual growth of over 13%. The majority of whom came for business (49.3%) followed by leisure/holiday visitors (24%). Out of the 750, 000 arrivals, 77% came from Africa, while Europe contributed 14%. Average length of stay has remained at a constant 9 days.

There exist opportunities to invest in the tourism and conference sector. The Department is promoting the construction of city hotels in Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba. There are also opportunities for hotel and conference facilities in Salima and Mangochi districts. We are promoting the development of a beach front in Salima area with a hotel and conference facilities, shopping mall complex, eateries, water sports, marina and housing estate. There are also opportunities for development of small to medium-scale accommodation units that have been identified in the Tourism Master plan and are located in areas that have got outstanding natural beauty across the country. The Government's policy put much emphasis on the development and promotion of eco-tourism, and moving the product up-market with high value but low volume accommodation. Other areas worth investing include cruise ships on Lake Malawi and river boat hotels on the Shire River, Cable Car on Mount Mulanje, casinos, recreation parks and other family entertainment facilities. I am pleased to inform you that the Government has put in place incentives specific to the tourism industry as a spring board for the development of the industry.

I now invite you all to join hands with the Government to develop and promote the Malawi Tourism industry by investing in this challenging but exciting sector.

Once again, you are welcome to Malawi, the Warm Heart of Africa!



Isaac Dalton Katopola
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM





MALAWI FACTS

Malawi is a long, narrow country, bordering Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique. The Lake takes up one fifth of the 12,000 sq km that make up Malawi. There are wildlife parks, beaches, mountains and cities to enjoy.

It rains from November till May, and there is a cool dry period from May to August. Hot and dry from August to November.

There is a good tar road from Nsanje in the South to Karonga in the far North. But once off the M1 it is wise to either use a four wheel drive or to inquire the condition of the road at your destination.

Electricity is 220/240 volt and a universal adaptor is needed.

Malawi is malarial area, precautions are essential. Malarone, starting two days before arriving in the country, continued one week after leaving will do. Sleeping under a net, wearing cloths that cover arms and legs in the evening and using deterrent (ankles!) also helps.

The Malawi Kwacha is the currency, foreign exchange can be brought to Malawi in any quantity but it should be registered if you plan to take (some of it) out again.



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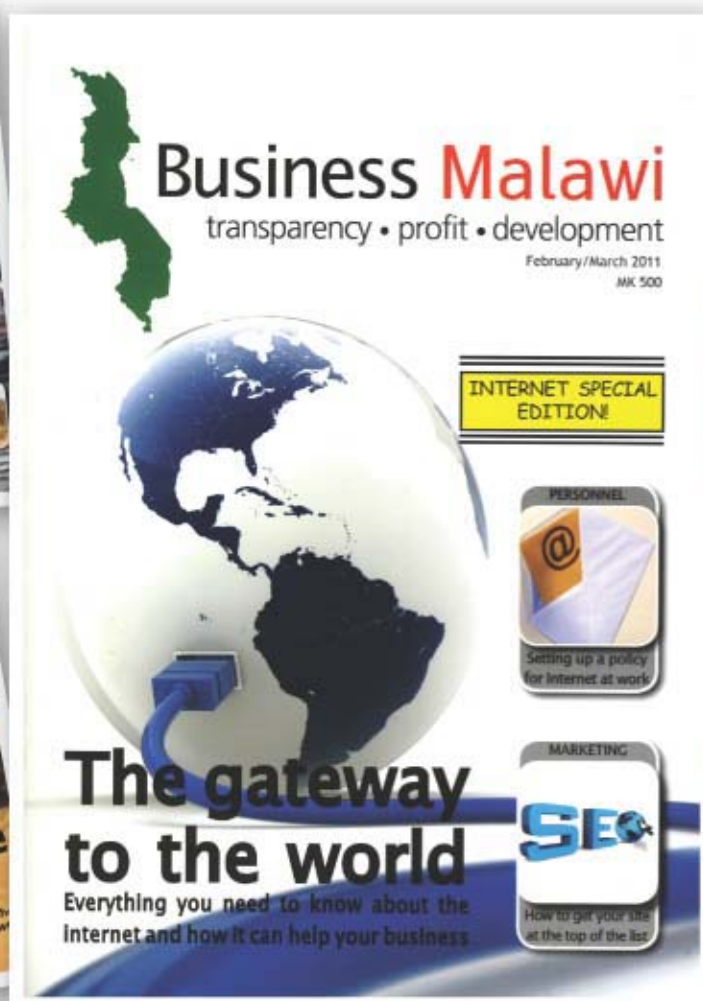
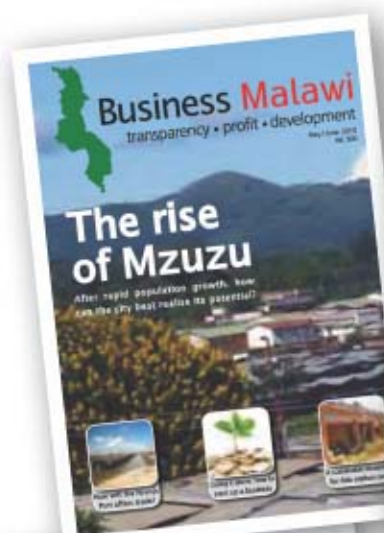
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