



# LATITUDE 15°

*A showcase hotel in Zambia*

Home of the Victoria Falls, Zambia is a truly authentic African holiday experience – one with deep culture, dramatic landscapes, abundant wildlife and peaceful people. One of the most striking impressions of Zambia is its sheer size – think Texas, then halve the population.







Lusaka, the nation's capital, is its largest urban zone, with a mishmash of tree-lined streets, bustling African markets and Soviet-looking high-rise blocks of modern commerce. In recent years it has become something of a boom town and is one of the fastest-growing cities in central Africa. New buildings are popping up everywhere with numerous chain stores and shopping malls emerging in the sprawling suburbs.

There are no real attractions, grand museums or historical treasures other than the Munda Wanga Environmental Park which has a wildlife sanctuary and botanical garden; and the Lilayi Elephant Nursery who cares for orphaned elephants. Nonetheless, there's a genuine African feel to the place and is an ideal before and after stop-over for those embarking on safaris.

As such, luxury accommodations may not be high on your list of expectations; but you'll be wrong on just about every level.

At Hotel Latitude 15° think design aficionado heaven. Here it's all bespoke, exclusive, repurposed, recycled, boutique, breath-taking and jaw-dropping. You'll find a statement pieces in every corner; pieces so fine they'll need to be looked at, studied, sat on and discussed. Based solely on its eclectic décor and chilled ambience, Latitude 15° merits at least a one-night stay.

Outside the lawned garden is hung heavy with a collection of giant Acacias and leafy palms; there are two aqua blue swimming pools and a collection of enormous parasols. Here and there are hollowed out tree trunks providing home to Echeveria succulents; with bursts of shocking pink and white bougainvillea that add vivid shocks of colour to the setting.

From the terrace black metal framed glass doors, reminiscent of the 60s, lead to the lounge. The walls are painted white, as are the floors, which have elegantly worn through to the dark wood beneath it, in high traffic areas.

Inside there's a collection of leather sofas, antique rugs, soft fabric arm chairs, repurposed wooden doors from Zanzibar turned into coffee tables, worn leather hide chairs, tall brass vases, immense African wall art - jewellery art, framed fabrics, photography, oil paintings, charcoal sketches, water colours, Congo wood carvings, ancient travel trunks, modern furniture standing beside antiques, farming implements, tribal drums. Then there's fence walls made of bicycle gear cogs; and the chandeliers made of glass beads, recycled copper discs, wine-bottle glass shards, even splinters





of wood that have been shaved and polished to perfection. The whole ambience is relaxing and chic, blended with subtle luxury.

The most eye-catching wall art is a collection of books whose pages have been shaped to form the outline of the African continent. It's proudly displayed in a box frame above the fireplace. Another is a large lampshade of woodpeckers made entirely of beads. It too stands smugly atop an old wooden chest.

There's no space wasted here. It's quite literally wall-to-wall art. One corner displays a collection of agricultural tools, another a long black and white landscape photograph of galloping eland, underneath which is a sagging old dark wood sideboard. Nearby are a collection of old photos, mostly of people posing stiffly; there's even one where six Zebra have been harnessed to pull a carriage.

Here everything is on a huge scale. Including the personalities that make it work. Like mixologist, Mike Sianchebani, who's eager to tell visitors about how he got into the business. But watch out, his traditional Mojito is something to be reckoned with.



On the wining and dining side the chefs are creative, designing dishes that entice you to partake in a culinary adventure.

There are 35 blissfully luxurious bedrooms which are spacious and individually styled with sumptuous fabrics, velvet sofas and chairs, faux-fur throws, cool slate tables, hide stools, tumbled glass lamps, beaded cushions, bespoke artwork, flat screen 32" TVs and walk-in Moroccan-tiled showers. Ask for room 21, which has doors to its own private garden.

Latitude 15 was once a Colonial lodge, dating back to the early 60s. Following extensive refurbishment in 2014, its Lusaka's only boutique hotel and is favoured by discerning travellers and affluent locals, complete with a gym, spa and some very cool workspaces with hot-desking perches. It's located in the suburb of Kabulonga, with embassies for neighbours, and is a 30-minute drive from the International Airport. [AC](#)

Check out their website for details [15.thelatitudehotels.com](http://15.thelatitudehotels.com).

Written and photographed by Cindy-Lou Dale

