



EXPERIENCE THE CULTURAL HERITAGE



OUR BRAND ESSENCE



Malawi tourism logo depicts the country's core tourist products which are as follows:

- Red** Represents the warmth and friendliness of the people of Malawi
- Gold** Within the heart: represents the richness of Malawi's numerous natural resources
- Blue** Represents the lake and rivers of Malawi, with the striped blue depicting enchanting waves of the fresh waters of Lake Malawi
- Green** Represents the country's nature and wildlife

Malawi Tourism's brand essence rests on three major competitive attributes, namely;

- **Rich in contrast:** Diverse lake experience, variety of landscapes, habitats, climates and cultural assets
- **Compact in size:** Short distances between attractions, comparatively little crowded
- **Big in hospitality:** Peaceful environment, neighborly social interaction, tolerant and authentic relationship with visitors and other cultures

QUICK FACTS ABOUT MALAWI

★ VISA

The Malawi Department of Immigration is responsible for issuance of Visa and other travel related documents. Please refer to this link provided: <https://www.immigration.gov.mw>

★ WHEN TO VISIT

- **Cool-dry Season:** May - August (Temperature: 15°C - 26°C)
Fresh and chilly evenings with bright sunshine during the day suitable for travellers from the Northern Hemisphere
- **Hot Season:** September to November (Temperature: 22°C - 42°C)
Best for game viewing and bird watching
- **Rainy Season:** November to April
Best for photographic safaris

★ FACT BOX

Location	Southern Africa
Size	118,484 Km ²
Capital City	Lilongwe
Commercial City	Blantyre
Language	Official Language: English National Language: Chichewa

For more information visit : www.visitmalawi.mw

MAP OF MALAWI





There are many reasons why you should visit Malawi, but perhaps the country's greatest asset is its people. Malawians are arguably some of the friendliest people in the world and every visitor will be welcomed with a hearty smile on arrival in Malawi. Malawians are very friendly, calm, pleasant and hospitable. The character and generosity of Malawians is the reason why Malawi is known as the 'Warm Heart of Africa'.

However, the charm of Malawi doesn't solely rely on hospitality. Malawi's mix of cultures - drums, dance, masks and languages - continue to fascinate visitors. Locals welcome the interest in their daily life and few visitors will leave without experiencing some of Malawi's traditional elements. Many Malawians are descendants of the Bantu people who migrated to Malawi across Africa for hundreds of years until the 15th century. Malawi is home to more than 12 different ethnic groups, each of which is represented

by unique traditional dances, rituals and arts and crafts. The largest ethnic group is the Chewa, whose mother tongue, Chichewa, is predominantly spoken in Malawi.

Masks are commonly used in various dances and ceremonies, but these are usually specific to the ethnic group with the most known being the 'Gule Wamkulu' performed by the Nyau of the Chewa. Malawian dances have a deeper meaning than superficial ones and have therefore been handed down to the present day as part of Malawi's cultural heritage.

Many visitors fondly mention that the highlight of their journey to Malawi was the Malawians they met in the villages and at the markets. And many return because they feel Malawi is their second home. We welcome you with all our hearts. Come and visit Malawi, the Warm Heart of Africa.

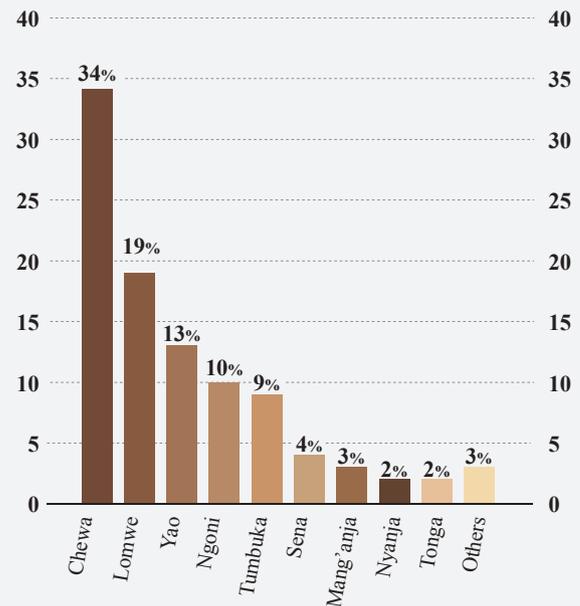
History

The first people to settle in the area of present-day Malawi were the Akafula people who came from DRC. They settled in small groups scattered in different parts of Malawi. Later, in the late 15th century, the Maravi people arrived from the south-east of DRC and settled in the Dedza/Salima area on the southern shore of Lake Malawi, establishing the Maravi Empire. The Maravi are now known as the Chewa. The country's current name, Malawi, is thought to derive from this word Maravi, which means 'Flames'. The Maravi then greatly expanded their power and came to dominate a larger area, but by 1700 the empire was broken up into individual tribes. Other tribes such as the Tumbuka, Balowoka, Yao, Swahili, Kalolo, Lomwe, Ngoni and British came to Malawi at various times and settled here. Arab slave traders landed on the shores of Lake Malawi from the Indian Ocean island of Zanzibar in search of slaves, and the slave trade continued from 1840 until the late 19th century. The current borders of Malawi were established when it became a British Protectorate in 1891. In 1907, the Protectorate was renamed Nyasaland and retained this name until the end of British rule. In 1953, the British Nyasaland Protectorate was made a Protectorate within the semi-independent Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The Federation was broken up in 1963 and Nyasaland became independent as Malawi on 6 July 1964. Two years later, the country became a republic with Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda as its first president.



Ethnic Groups

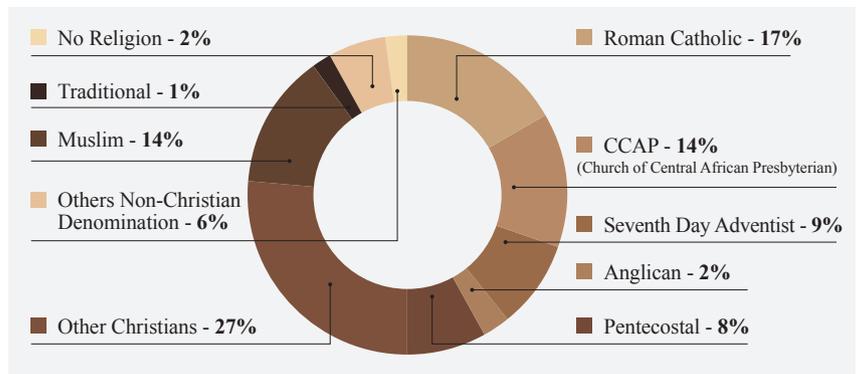
Many of today's Malawians are descended from the Bantu people who migrated across Africa to Malawi for hundreds of years until the 15th century. Malawi has a diverse mix of tribes with the Chewa being the largest group, accounting for 34% of the population according to a 2018 census. Other ethnic groups include the Lomwe (19%), Yao (13%), Ngoni (10%), Tumbuka (9%), Sena (4%), Mang'anja (3%), Nyanja (2%), Tonga (2%), Nkhonde (1%), Lambya (1%) and Sukwa (1%). The Chewa who make up the largest percentage of the population are concentrated in the Central and Southern parts of the country. The Yao are mostly found around the southern part of Lake Malawi, while the Tumbuka live in the North. Each ethnic group has its own culture in terms of dress, dance and language. Masks are often used in various dances and ceremonies, but these usually vary from group to group. The most well-known dance is the Gule Wamkulu which is performed by the Nyau of the Chewa group.



Religion

Christianity was introduced to Malawians in the late 19th century by missionaries such as David Livingstone, who worked along the lakeshore. Approximately 77% of Malawi's population is Christian, making it the largest stronghold in Malawi. The next common religion is Islam, with around 14% belonging to this religion. Islam was introduced to Malawi between the 16th and 19th centuries with Arab and Swahili traders who settled on the East African coast and traded in ivory, gold and slaves. Most of Malawi's Muslims are from the Yao tribe, who are said to be 'the most important source of Islam in Malawi'.

Other religions make up about 7%, and atheists make up about 2% of the population. Malawi is one of the most peaceful countries in Africa and religion has never been a source of conflict. The two main religions, Christianity and Islam, coexist happily, and in some places mosques and churches are even located next to each other.



Languages

The official language of Malawi is English, but the national language is Chichewa which is spoken particularly in the south and central regions of the country. In the north, Chitumbuka is the most widely spoken language. There are many other languages, including Yao, Ngoni and Nyanja. Chichewa is classified as a Bantu language, which includes almost all languages spoken in sub-equatorial Africa, including 40 languages indigenous to Malawi. Many Bantu languages share a common pronunciation, grammar and a closely related vocabulary and speakers of other Bantu languages such as Swahili, Shona and Zulu can recognize many similar and identical words in Chichewa. English is the official language in education, and Malawians in urban areas speak English fluently. Even in rural areas, people rarely encounter the linguistic communication barriers found in other African countries.

Politics

Since 1994, Malawi has been a multi-party democracy. The President is both head of state and head of government, elected by universal suffrage every five years and can serve up to two terms. The Cabinet is appointed by the President and executive power is exercised by the Government. Legislative power is vested in both the Government and the National Assembly, while the judiciary is independent of the executive and legislative branches. Local government is exercised in 28 districts within three regions, with administrative officers and district commissioners that are appointed by the central government. People aged 18 and above have the right to vote.

The People

Malawians are, by and large, honest, conservative, good-humored, and mild-tempered. They tend to be quiet and are always smiling. The Malawian traits of discipline, hard work, and perseverance come from a long tradition of strict social discipline that is imparted from birth. Children in Malawi learn to fear and respect elders. These attitudes are implanted at different stages of life, but the most important time for this is at puberty, when both

girls and boys undergo community counseling. For strangers, this strict disciplinary code translates into warmth and helpfulness. Visitors are welcomed with open arms, offered meals and, where necessary, a typical Malawian village as a community will host or help a total stranger. The legendary hospitality of Malawians is well known to people who have visited or worked in Malawi.

THE ARTS



Zeze

Traditional Drum

Music

Malawi's music is a mixture of different musical styles and has a rich character that is unique to the country. Malawi's traditional music, dance and drumming festivals are an integral part of social and religious life, not only for entertainment but also for celebration, healing and welcoming important visitors. Malawian musical instruments are similar to those found in East and Southern Africa, but have local names and special characteristics. These include the small 'Ulimba' made from gourd, the ceremonial 'Giant' made from tree trunks, the 'Zeze' one-stringed violin, the 'Maseche' rattles worn on the legs and arms of dancers, and the 'Mambilira' which resembles a western xylophone



Painted Mugs



Wooden Frame



Stone Sculpture

Arts

Malawian artists have traditionally preferred the three-dimensional world of sculpture to painting and drawing. Elaborately carved wood and stone sculptures are a traditional art form in Malawi. Malawian art often depicts people, animals, everyday village life and dances, and can be found everywhere from the oldest rock paintings to traditional wood carvings. In recent years, there has also been a growing appreciation of painting as well as digital art, especially among young people. Of note are the rock paintings found in the Chongoni Rock Art Area in central Malawi. This area has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List as having the highest concentration of rock paintings in Central Africa. The red paintings by the Akafula depict scenes of hunting, while the white paintings depict scenes of peaceful farming by the Chewa who later settled in the area. Masks are also a common type of artwork typically associated with festivals and ceremonies. Making masks from bronze, wood, feathers and other objects has been a traditional practice in Nyau society for centuries. A typical Nyau mask features an elongated face and a beard made of cloth, leather or human hair.



Art Gallery

Malawi is a country that has rich culture which is reflected in the arts. One of the places where art lovers can go to explore various art is the La Galleria art gallery in Old Town Mall, off Paul Kagame Road, Lilongwe. La Galleria is a pleasant gallery that sells vivid African paintings, greeting cards, sculptures, bags and jewellery from across Malawi. The gallery displays paintings that depict the Malawian style and way of life by top and upcoming Malawian artists. The gallery was opened in 2011, and currently works with more than 150 artists, collecting art and connecting them to clients within and outside Malawi. There are roughly 200 paintings in stock at La Galleria. For tourists looking to take home artwork of the Warm Heart of Africa, this is one of the best art galleries. Enjoy the art by Malawi's talented artists and craftsmen.

MYTHS

Mbona Cult

The Mbona Cult is a religious faith found in the southern part of Malawi near the district of Nsanje. Mbona is a territorial cult, whose members are a group of people living together in a particular place, and is the result of residence rather than blood or ethnic designation. The cult is supervised by the local chief or headman under the direction of the high priest and supreme administrator. The cult is found mainly among the local Mang'anja people and is believed to have existed for a long time, although the earliest record of its existence is from 1862, so it is uncertain how long it has existed. There are various myths that claim Mbona was from the Mang'anja tribe and was a legendary majestic figure with superhuman strength, or that Mbona was not human but could transform into a large snake and hide from his enemies. However, what is common in all these myths is that he was known as the god of rain and had magical powers to make it rain and create forests where

Myths form a very important part of Malawi's collective wisdom and history. Myths help Malawians to understand the origin of things like death and the cause of natural disasters. These myths explain the life of the spirits and their deeds. They also influence people's way of thinking and doing.

there were none. Various stories have been told about his death, including one that claims he was murdered because of his popularity which caused some conflict with the secular and religious authorities of the time. Other narratives allege that he wished to die and committed suicide by cutting his own throat with a leaf (the only thing that could kill him) and that he was asked to help the people and offered himself as a sacrifice. However, after his death, mysterious events occurred and rain began to fall. Soon after this, people began to worship him and sought help from him when they faced personal problems, calamities or droughts. The mbona cult aims to ensure abundant rainfall during the right season by making offerings to the cult's shrine, and rain-making rituals which are held during droughts. It is also invoked in times of serious threats to the productivity and fertility of the land and people, such as locust plagues, floods and epidemics. After his death, Mbona's head was placed in a sacred ditch at Khulubvi in Nsanje, where a shrine still stands today. When you visit Malawi, experience this unique part of our culture and traditional beliefs.

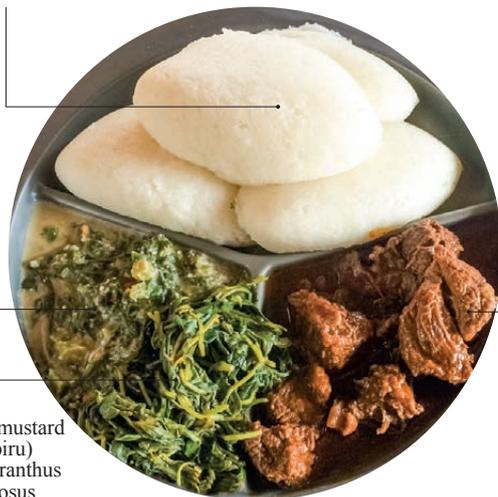
Napolo

Legend has it that a giant snake with many heads, named Napolo, was believed to live in a deep sacred pool in the mountains. When Napolo migrated, the area would be filled with the sound of drums, invariably causing super-flash floods and landslides. In art, Napolo is usually depicted as a spirit, ferocious wild animal or as a snake, and although it is a mythical creature, it is said that should a person witness Napolo, they will surely die. In the 20th century, Napolo became the talk of the town, believed to have caused significant damage to several areas in southern Malawi. For example, between 1945 and 1946, a cyclone hit the town of Zomba and the rains consistently fell for a long period of time. After torrential rains on the plateau, flash floods that came down from Zomba

Plateau caused widespread destruction of houses, bridges and property, resulting in the loss of many lives. At this time, Napolo was said to have moved from the depths of Zomba Plateau to the marshy Lake Chilwa. Napolo is also said to have migrated again in 1991 to Phalombe, in the vicinity of Mount Mulanje. Following torrential rains, flash floods and landslides occurred and muddy waters washed away all bridges on the Phalombe-Mulanje road, devastating the Phalombe area and killing hundreds of people. In the past, the causes of phenomena such as floods and landslides could not be easily explained due to lack of scientific knowledge, and many people turned to spirits such as Napolo for explanations. The myth of Napolo is still passed down from generation to generation and various artists have used Napolo as a metaphor in popular songs, short stories and poems.

FOOD

Nsima



Beef

Brown mustard (Mpiru) & Amaranthus spinosus (Bonongwe)

Nsima

Nsima is Malawi's national dish, made from maize flour mixed with hot water and stirring (Kuthyakula) until thickened. Nsima is most popular in Malawi, although other types of carbohydrates such as rice, cassava and potatoes are also eaten. Nsima is usually eaten with bare hands with stewed vegetables, fish, beans or meat.

Kondowole



Cassava Leaves (Chigwada)

Kondowole

Kondowole is a staple food eaten mainly in northern Malawi, similar to Nsima, but whereas Nsima is made from maize flour, Kondowole is made from cassava flour. Kondowole is usually eaten with fish, but can be eaten with any type of side dish. It is sticky and filling, and some people say that if they eat Kondowole for lunch, they are not hungry at night, even if they have not eaten anything else. Try this delicious dish when travelling in northern Malawi

Chambo

One of Malawi's most famous dishes is chambo. Chambo is endemic to Lake Malawi and is a type of freshwater fish in the tilapia family. It is dried in the sun, grilled, boiled or fried and eaten with soup. In Malawi, it can be found in many restaurants and hotels, especially on the shores of Lake Malawi. A trip to Malawi is not complete without a taste of chambo.

Kondowole



Tomato Soup

Chambo

Thobwa

Thobwa is a traditional fermented drink popular throughout Malawi, made from maize and millet or sorghum, with a milky appearance, grain flavour and grainy texture. Because Thobwa is made from maize, it is very filling and many Malawians take it as their energy drink for the day, and it is sold everywhere in recycled plastic bottles in towns and in clay pots in villages. The name, Thobwa means 'sweet beer' and is non-alcoholic but becomes a local beer when left to ferment for five days.



Zitumbuwa

Zitumbuwa is a popular snack in Malawi, similar to banana fritters. They are usually fried after mixing maize flour, bananas and sugar together and come in different variations. Desserts are eaten on special occasions in Malawi, and zitumbuwa is one of the cheapest and tastiest desserts available on Malawi's roadsides and markets. If you get hungry while sightseeing or shopping in Malawi, try zitumbuwa.



DANCES



1. GULE WAMKULU

The Gule Wamkulu dance was selected in 2005 as one of the 90 Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Program. Gule Wamkulu was initially performed by members of the Nyau brotherhood which is a secret society of initiated Chewa men, at the request of the village chief around the 17th century. In modern times, it is mainly performed at funerals and memorial services, and also at celebrations such as chiefs' inaugurations, weddings and after the harvest. The dancers wear costumes and masks made of wood or straw and represent a great variety of characters, from wild animals, spirits of the dead and slavers to more recent objects such as motorbikes and helicopters. As representatives of the world of spirits and the dead, they dance with extraordinary energy, entertaining and frightening the audience.

2. VIMBUZA

The Vimbuza Healing Dance was selected in 2005 as one of the 90 Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO's Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage programme. Vimbuza is a dance performed to heal mental illness as part of traditional healing and is popular among the Tumbuka people of northern Malawi. Most of the patients are women suffering from various mental illnesses. They are treated over a period of weeks or months by prominent healers who run a village house called Temphiri. Women and children from the village form a circle around the patients, who slowly go into a trance, sing songs and invoke spirits. The men beat a drum rhythm specific to the spirits. The powerful experience of singing and drumming together provides a space for the patients to heal their illness. The repertoire of songs and intricate drumming is constantly growing, and all the dance virtuosity is part of the rich cultural heritage of the Tumbuka people.

3. TCHOPA

The Lomwe sacrificial dance, Tchopa, was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2014. Tchopa is a dance practiced by the Lomwe community in southern Malawi. It is commonly performed in celebration of a good harvest or successful hunting, or during dedications to ancestral spirits after calamities such as drought or disease outbreaks. Tchopa uses three drums of different sizes and is performed by 20 to 30 dancers in a circle, crossing each other. Some dance with bags on their backs containing farm tools, animal skins, dolls, hunting equipment and old kitchen utensils. Tchopa is mainly performed by older Lomwe men and women, who function as bearers and preservers, but is now often performed by children as well. Other important roles include costume and drum makers, drummers, whistlers and dancers. Tchopa strengthens the social cohesion of the Lomwe community, the importance of helping each other in times of need such as illness and bereavement, and jointly working the fields for the overburdened practitioners.

4. MGANDA

'Mganda' which is also known as 'Malipenga is a traditional dance that is common in central and northern Malawi. Mganda has its origins in the system of military parades and musical bands introduced to Nyasaland (now Malawi) by British officers of the Kings' African Rifles (KAR) during the colonial period. Synchronized to the sound of louder and more powerful drums, they perform vigorous, dazzling movements similar to those of military training, and swing with the traditional African rhythms. The dancers carry small flags or baja made of gourds, accentuated by whistles and smooth choreography. Dancers usually form groups of 6-20 or more in two to five rows and play drums while facing the audience. All dancers face the same direction and they must be clean and neatly dressed. They are judged by the public and the audience on their cleanliness, grooming and how well their uniform is ironed.

MALAWI CULTURAL SITES TO VISIT



Chongoni Rock Art Area

Location: Dedza

Chongoni Rock Art Area is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that was inscribed in 2006. It is located approximately 25 km north-west of Dedza in a cluster of forested granite hills, covering an area of 126.4 km². The area is home to 127 rock art sites, characterized by the highest concentration of rock art in Central Africa. Of the 127 sites, only three are open to the public – Chentcherere, Namzeze and Mphunzi - and all are managed by the Department of Antiques, Ministry of Tourism, and Wildlife & Culture. These rock paintings can be divided into two main types: the first, painted in red, depict unique geometric figures and patterns, as well as mythological animals and humans. These paintings date from the Late Stone Age and are thought to have been made by the BaTwa (Akafula) hunter-gatherers who lived in the area before the Chewa people migrated. The second type are painted in white and were done by the Chewa who migrated to the area and depict animals, spirits, gods, reptiles and legendary creatures. The white paintings are relatively recent, given that some of them actually depict vehicles. Some of the symbols are strongly associated with women and still have cultural relevance amongst the Chewa, and the sites are associated with ceremonies and rituals. Despite stylistic differences, these two types of paintings are very valuable since they demonstrate that the Chewa coexisted with the Akafula until the mid-19th century.

St. Michael and All Angels Church

Location: Blantyre

St. Michael and All Angels Church is located on the original Scottish mission site in Blantyre, and was constructed from 1888 to 1891. This magnificent red-brick church has been designated a national monument by the Malawian Department of Antiquities and is one of the biggest landmarks of Blantyre. It was described by Rev. Alexander Hetherwick as the first permanent Christian Church erected between the Zambezi and the Nile rivers. The architect, Rev David Clement Scott, and the local workers all had no previous experience constructing this type of building. Therefore, there was no plan or sketch, and the bricks were laid and tested before being steadily assembled. The completely different design of the left and right towers is also a unique feature of this church building.





Kamuzu Mausoleum

Location: Lilongwe

Located on Presidential Way next to the parliament building in Lilongwe, Kamuzu Mausoleum is the resting place of Malawi's first President, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda. Construction of the mausoleum was completed in 2006. The marble and granite mausoleum has four pillars that represent the initials of the former president's most cherished principles - Unity, Loyalty, Discipline and Obedience - and his portrait hangs at the entrance. Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda was born on 14 May 1898, ruled from 1961 to 1994 and died on 25 November 1997, aged 99.



National War Memorial Tower

Location: Lilongwe

Located at the centre of Lilongwe between the Capital Hill and Area 18 Filling Station, the memorial tower is set in the same compound as a statue of the first president of Malawi, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda. The monument was constructed in honour of all soldiers and civilians who died during the First and Second World Wars and other military operations both within and outside Malawi. You can find staff who are very informative with lots of local stories and they can guide you to the top of the tower. The view from the top of the tower is one of the best viewing points of the capital city. You can see Capitol Hill, the Parliament, Bunda Mountain, Ngala Mountain and even Bingu Stadium.



MUSEUM



Chichiri Museum

Previously known as Museum of Malawi

Opening Hours: 08:00-16:00 (Mon-Sun) Location: Blantyre

Museum of Malawi, also known as the Chichiri Museum, is a historical and cultural museum in Blantyre. The museum was officially opened in 1966 as the first museum in Malawi. Inside the museum, there are interesting exhibits on Malawi's history and culture, from Stone Age tools to old banknotes, traditional musical instruments, artefacts, documents on the slave trade and Malawi's independence, as well as wildlife from Malawi's national parks. Also on display outside the building is an old 1902 locomotive, Malawi's first fire engine, a bus from the time of Nyasaland and a small house where visitors can learn about traditional ways of life. Museum of Malawi is located along Kasungu Crescent, near Chichiri Shopping Mall in Blantyre. The museum is a must-visit for anyone interested in Malawian culture and history.



The Cultural & Museum Centre Karonga

Opening Hours: 08:00-17:00 (Mon-Sat) / 14:00-17:00 (Sun) Location: Karonga

The Cultural & Museum Centre Karonga (CMCK), commonly called Karonga Museum was constructed through EU funding and officially opened by former President Bingu wa Mutharika in November 2004. The central exhibition entitled 'Malawi from Dinosaurs to Democracy' focuses on 240 million years of Karonga via milestones such as prehistoric landscapes, animals and early humans and their way of life, archaeological records, history of slave trade and the colonial era, Malawi under Dr. Banda, culture and traditions of Karonga people. The main exhibit is a life-size replica skeleton of the Malawisaurus (Malawi Lizards), whose virtually intact 120-million-year-old fossil skeleton was discovered in 1924 in Karonga District. There is also a superb sequence of displays on human evolution, including a replica of the 2.5-million-year-old Hominid's jawbone discovered near Chilumba in 1991. It is the world's oldest-known relict of the genus Homo (the same genus as modern humans).



The kuNgoni Centre Of Culture And Art

Opening Hours: 07:30 - 16:00 (Mon-Sat) / 08:00 - 16:00 (Sun) **Location:** Dedza

The KuNgoni Centre of Culture and Art was established in 1976 on the grounds of the Mua Mission. Its mission is to train local sculptors in various arts and to improve local incomes, and visitors can watch talented artists carve elaborate sculptures from a block of wood. The artworks are sold in a shop attached to the KuNgoni Centre, as well as in shops around the country. The Chamare Museum, located in the KuNgoni Centre, also features a very valuable exhibition focusing on the three main ethnic groups found in the Mua area (Chewa, Ngoni and Yao). The museum consists of three gallery houses surrounding a cement replica of a baobab tree, which symbolizes the three tents that missionaries pitched under the baobab tree in 1902. The first gallery addresses the history of Christianity, the growth of the Mua mission and cultural formation. The second gallery focuses on the culture and spirituality of the Chewa people.

The last gallery illustrates the culture of the Ngoni and Yao people. The two cultural galleries explore the significant rituals and life milestones important to individuals, families and communities, including childbirth, puberty, coming of age and death, which are illustrated with text panels and hundreds of photographs. The highlight of the museum is the spectacular display of hundreds of Gule Wamkulu masks. In addition to the sculpture and Chamare Museum, the KuNgoni Centre also has various cultural departments. For those who want to learn more about Malawian history and culture, there is the Kafukufuku Research Centre, where you can delve into a collection of research papers, dance and ceremony videos, photographs and slides, and over 1000 books. There are also cultural courses on Malawian history, art and language, and a program of cultural dances. The KuNgoni Centre is located in a village called Mua in the Dedza district, about 60 km from Salima, a two-hour drive from Lilongwe and three hours from Blantyre.



MARKET VISITS

Malawian markets are vibrant and full of life. The bustling and energetic local markets sell everything from fruit and vegetables to meat, household items, arts and crafts, traditional cloths and much more. Even if you don't need to buy anything, it's a fascinating place to experience daily life and shopping in Malawi and interact with locals. Some souvenir vendors may initially overcharge you for their prices but enjoy haggling over them, since it's one of the best parts of being at a market in Malawi. There is little to be gained by being eager to save a few kwacha. However, some crafts take days, weeks or even months to complete, so please play fair. Most towns in Malawi usually have a local market where you can find your favourite snacks and mementos of your trip.



VILLAGE VISITS



There are many reasons why you should visit Malawi, but perhaps the country's greatest asset is its people. Malawians are arguably some of the friendliest people in the world, full of charm and hospitality. It is this character and generosity that has given rise to the country's reputation as the 'Warm Heart of Africa'. One of the best ways to see this side of Malawi is to visit local communities and live in rural Malawi, living the same life as the villagers. Most travellers remember their interactions with the villagers as the highlight of their trip. Discover something new about Malawi and make unforgettable memories by farming with the villagers, cooking Nsima (Malawi's national dish), fetching water from the well, playing with the children and sharing stories and laughter.

Places That Offer Village Tours

The Responsible Safari Company

Tel: +265 (0) 999 970 407

Email: info@responsiblesafaricompany.com

Njobvu Cultural Village

Tel: +265 (0) 888 623 530

Email: info@njobvuvillage.org

TOUR OPERATORS

Name	Phone Number	Email
Ulendo Safaris	+265 887 006 250 / +265 888 207 896	info@ulendo.net
Malawian Style	+265 997 725 777 / +265 (0) 1 771 789	info@malawianstyle.com
Small Steps Adventure Tours	+265 999 773 395 / +265 888 873 783	franciwell@yahoo.co.uk
Misuku Expeditions	+265 999 629 810	misuku.expeditions@gmail.com
The Travel Centre	+265 (0) 1 772242	info@travelcentremw.com
Central African Wilderness	+265 888 822 398	reservations@cawsmw.com
Land and Lake Safaris	+265 (0) 1 757 120	info@landlake.net
Stars Travel and Tour Services	+26588 883 141 / +265 995 617 131	kelvinestars-travel.com
Midland Tours and Travel	+265 (0) 1 752 250 / +265 (0) 1 752 251	info@midlandtravelmw.com
Satguru Travel and Tours	+265 992 850 850 / +265 992 250 250	sales.llw6@satguru-travel.com
Travel Net and Tours	+265 (0) 1 772 814 / +265 999 174 401	travel@travernetntours.com
Mthunzi Travel and Tours Ltd	+265 888 709 149 / +265 993 376 610	reservations@mthunziholdings.com
LIHACO Travel and Tours	+265 999 962 880	reservations@lihaco.net
Bon Voyage Tours	+265 (0) 1 774 780 / +265 999 917 900	bonvoyage@africa-online.net
Continental Travel and Tours	+265 (0) 1 775 599 / +265 888 872 085	contitravel@globemw.net
CBR Tours	+265 999 397 139	khumbo.mhone2020@gmail.com

MALAWI CULTURAL

Malawi has a lot to offer when it comes to events, with musical, cultural and sporting events

January

Chilimika

Date: 1st -5th January

Location: Nkhata Bay, Northern Region

Chilimika is a Chewa word which means Year. The Chilimika dance welcomes the arrival of a new year and is celebrated mainly by the Tonga tribe in the northern region of Malawi. The festival usually consists of young people dancing for the older generation in their communities.

Chilembwe Day

Date: 15th January

Location: Nationwide

In 1915, during the First World War, the Reverend John Chilembwe organised an unsuccessful uprising against colonial rule. Today, Malawi sets aside 15 January each year to celebrate the life of Chilembwe, who has become a national hero.

March

Martyr's Day

Date: 3rd March

Location: Nationwide

This national holiday commemorates the lives of the individuals who played a role in Malawi's struggle for independence from British colonial regime on 3 March 1959.

May

Kamuzu Day

Date: 14th May

Location: Nationwide

A public holiday to honour Hastings Kamuzu Banda on his official birthday. Often regarded as the father and founder of the nation, Banda was the country's first president. He led Malawi to independence and ruled the country for over 30 years.

June

Luwawa International Mountain Bike Challenge

Date: Second weekend of June

Location: Luwawa Forest

Although it varies, the route usually starts at Luwawa Forest Lodge and runs along the ridges of the Viphya Mountains. There are fine views throughout the course, with plenty of opportunities to spot wildlife.

Lake Malawi Sailing Marathon

Date: End of June to beginning of July

Location: Lake Malawi

The Lake Malawi Sailing Marathon is an epic test of speed, endurance and sheer destination. It is also an opportunity to experience Malawi from a perspective witnessed by only a few.

July

Mount Mulanje Porters' Race

Date: First week of July

Location: Likhubula, Mulanje

The 25km Porters' Race is one of the Malawi's most extreme competitions, attracting elite runners from across the world. Participants ascend to Chambe Plateau, about 2,500metres above sea level, then to Lichenya in less than three hours.

National Independence Day

Date: 6th July

Location: Rotates regionally

This day commemorates Malawi's independence from the confederation in 1964.

August

Kungoni open day

Date: First Saturday of August

Location: Kungoni Centre of Culture & Art at Mua, Dedza

Held in memory of Father Jean-Baptiste Champmartin, to whom the museum at Mua is dedicated, this festival brings together drummers, singers and dancers from the surrounding village.

Umthetho

Date: Second Saturday of August

Location: Hora Mountain, Mzimba

Umthetho, which means 'custom' or 'governance' in Chewa, is celebrated by the Ngoni. It promotes conventional governance, heritage and traditions.

Kulamba

Date: Last Saturday of August

Location: Katete, Zambia

Kulamba is a celebration of the Chewa people to pay tribute to Chief Kalonga Gawa Undi through traditional dances and the presentation of gifts.

EVENTS CALENDAR

throughout the year. Below is a brief calendar of some of the main events in the country.

September

National Tourism Month

Date: 1st -30th September

Location: Rotates

This celebration aims to create awareness of the importance of tourism as well as its social, cultural, political and economic value.

Cape Maclear Triathlon

Date: 3rd week of September

Location: Cape Maclear, Mangochi

Set in the beautiful shores of Lake Malawi within a national park and a world heritage site, the triathlon promises to offer athletes and families a chance to enjoy the spectacular sun-kissed beaches, a warm sub-tropical climate as well as the friendly warm heart of the local inhabitants. The triathlon starts with a 700-m swim, followed by an undulating 18-km cycle through the hills of the national park and finally the 4.5-km run through the village and the park to finish off.

Gonapamuhanya

Date: Last weekend of September

Location: Bolero, Rumphu

Held by the Tumbukas to celebrate their heritage and Chikulamayembe Dynasty, this ceremony consists of the oral tradition of recounting the Chikulamayembe lineage and dance performances.

Lake of Stars

Date: Last weekend of September

Location: Rotates along the beaches of Lake Malawi

Lake of Stars is an annual three-day international festival held on the shore of Lake Malawi. It seeks to promote Malawi's creative industries, culture and tourism.

October

Mzuzu Fashion Week

Date: First week of October

Location: Mzuzu

A platform for local and international designers to showcase their work.

Blantyre Arts Festival (BAF)

Date: First weekend of October

Location: Blantyre Cultural Centre

The festival celebrates Malawi's cultural industries through exhibitions and workshops.

Mulhakho wa Alhomwe

Date: October

Location: Chonde, Mulanje

This festival marks the heritage of the Lhomwe people. It features an array of events including traditional dance performances, recitations of oral traditions and culinary displays.

Likoma Festival

Date: Second week of October

Location: Likoma and Chizumulu islands

The annual Likoma Festival is a contemporary celebration of arts and culture with a strong focus on artists and traditional dances from Malawi.



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