



# islandsonly

**Islands Only Trav Co (Pty) Ltd**

Cellular: + 27 (0) 83 381 1087

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Email: [info@islandsonly.com](mailto:info@islandsonly.com)Website: <http://www.islandsonly.com/>**Lake Malawi fast facts****travel information****When to Travel?**

Lake Malawi is a great year round destination! However, the dry 'winter' months from the end of April to beginning of August are probably the best time to visit. The daytime temperatures are mild to warm, evenings are cool, there is little no rain and the lake is calm and clear.

**Getting There:**

All IslandsOnly Malawi itineraries start in Lilongwe International Airport.

From here clients are transferred by road to Cape Maclear from where they are escorted to the islands of Domwe and Mumbo.

Clients continuing on to Kaya Mawa Lodge on Likoma Island will do so aboard the catamaran 'Mafusa', a wonderful 2-night journey up the lake.

**What to Take?**

Life in Malawi and particularly on the lake is laidback and informal. Clothing should include bathing suits, T-shirts, shorts, sneakers, light open footwear (e.g. sandals, etc), long pants and a sweater in the evenings when the temperatures will get cooler. Hats or caps are must as is sunscreen and mosquito repellent.

**Passports:**

- Valid passports are required for entry into Malawi
- Ensure that your passport is valid for at least six (6) months after your departure from Malawi.

**Visa:**

- European passport holders do not require visas
- South African passport holders do not require visas.
- All visitors are advised to check with their local Malawi representative for more specific details.

**Money:**

- South African Rand (ZAR) are accepted on the islands but one is always advised to carry US Dollars (USD) or Euro in cash or travellers cheques.
- Most credit cards are accepted

**Diplomatic Representatives in Malawi:****South Africa High Commission**

Off Convention Drive, City Centre, Lilongwe

Tel: 773722

**British High Commission**

Off Convention Drive, City Centre, Lilongwe

Tel: 772400 / 773036 / 772123

**USA Embassy**

Off Convention Drive, City Centre, Lilongwe

Tel: 773166

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## Health Considerations

- Before undertaking any travel all clients are encouraged to consult with their GP and/or local travel clinic for the most up-to-date health information on the destinations they are travelling to.

**NB:** Visitors to Malawi who have passed through Yellow Fever infected areas (e.g. Tanzania or Kenya) will be required to provide proof of a Yellow Fever vaccination before entering Malawi.

## Travel Insurance

- When travelling internationally it is important to ensure that a Travel Insurance Policy appropriately covers you against any unforeseen eventualities.
- Your insurance broker or provider will offer the necessary advice on specific travel insurance policies.
- Travellers from South Africa can go to the IslandsOnly Travel Shop for more details of tailor made travel policies.

## Departure Taxes

- All departure taxes are included the price of your airline ticket. There are no additional taxes to be paid in Malawi.



## destination overview

### Location:

The independent state of Malawi is a small landlocked country wedged between the countries Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique. It is roughly 900km long, 80km to 150km wide and covers an area of 120,000km<sup>2</sup>. The country's dominant features are the Great Rift Valley and Lake Malawi, the third largest lake on the continent.

Malawi is located on the eastern side of south-central Africa, between the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn.

### Geography:

As mentioned above, the geography of Malawi is dominated by Lake Malawi, which lies in a giant depression formed by the Great Rift Valley running through the country. The lake itself covers a fifth of the country. Together these two features make for some impressive landscapes from the sandy lakeshore to the precipitous cliffs that rise out of the lake to form the walls of the Rift Valley. These give way to the highland regions and rolling plateaus.

### History:

The early history of Malawi from the 14th to 19th centuries is dominated by various migrations of the Bantu peoples as they spread across the region. Some were more warlike than others and as the slave trade took hold in East Africa so the search for healthy men and women to sell spread inland with result that many indigenous and migrant 'Malawians' were captured and sold. Lake Malawi, as it later became known, was an important link in the slave trade across Africa.

The first Europeans to arrive were the Portuguese, travelling inland from their east-coast colony, now called Mozambique. However, it was the British and particularly Dr David Livingstone who put Malawi on the map, so to speak. His influence brought about the founding of the Universities Mission in Central Africa (UMCA) with the aim of spreading Christianity, combating the slave trade and encouraging trade and commerce. In spite of the ongoing European competition for area around Lake Malawi the first British Protectorate was declared in 1889. This protectorate grew and in 1907 the Colony of Nyasaland was declared. In 1953 Nyasaland became part of the Federation of Northern (now Zambia) and Southern (now Zimbabwe) Rhodesia. Growing disenchantment and political opposition from the African population led, ultimately, to the formation of the Malawi Congress Party, which after constitutional talks in London and resulting elections, swept to power. Malawi became independent in 1964. In 1966 the Republic of Malawi was born and Hastings Banda became president.

### Government:

Hastings Banda's effective dictatorship came to an end in 1994 with elections that finally realised a transition to multiparty democracy and a functioning parliamentary system of government. The president is head of state.

### Population:

Estimates put the population at just over 10 million people, most of whom are of African origin and live in the rural areas. Small populations of Europeans and Asians live in the cities.

### Languages:

The official language is English and widely spoken in the towns and cities as well as the rural areas. Chewa or Chichewa is the national language and commonly spoken throughout the country. The different ethnic groups and tribes have their own dialects but these are limited to specific areas.

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**Religion:**

Most Malawians follow the Christian faith as put forth by the Protestant churches that were started by the original missionaries to the country. Catholicism is practised in smaller numbers while many follow indigenous Christian faiths that are mixed with traditional tribal beliefs.

**Economy:**

The Malawi economy is reliant on the agricultural sector. The majority of the population lives in the rural areas where they are engaged as subsistence farmers or employed on large commercial farms. Tobacco is the largest export, responsible for about 70% of Malawi's foreign earnings. Other export crops include tea and sugar.

**Currency:**

The Malawi Kwacha (MK) is divided into 100 tambala (t).

**Weights and measures:**

The metric system is used

**Time:**

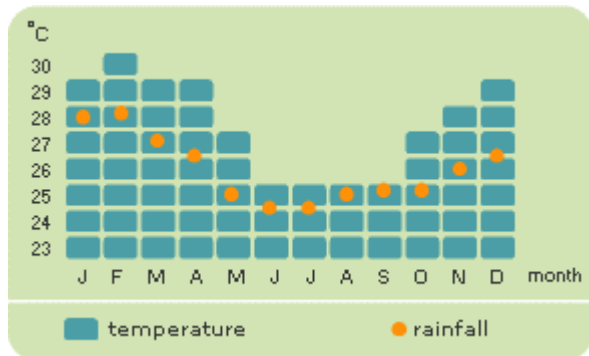
GMT +2

**Electricity:**

220 to 240 volts



The weather on and around Lake Malawi is variable but generally far drier than the rest of the country with warm to hot days and mild to warm evenings.

**At a glance:**

- During the summer months from mid-October to the end of April, and particularly from January to March, the days are hot (+30°C) with frequent rain showers in afternoon.
- By April to May the days are warm (+26°C) and dry with pleasant cool evenings with light breezes.
- The 'winter' months from June to August are dry with warm days (+26°C) and cool nights and the occasional strong winds.
- During September and October one can expect hot to very hot days (+30°C) and warm nights.
- From November to the beginning of January days are hot to very hot (+30°C) days, with warm nights. Some early rain showers.

During the summer months from mid-October to the end of April, the islands become lush and green with spectacular 360° views across the lake. Rains on the lakeshore and islands keep the dust to a minimum and extinguish any late dry season bush fires. This provides for a sparkling atmosphere and wonderful views. From Likoma Island one can see the forested shores of nearby Mozambique.

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