

INFORMATION CARD

THE ELEPHANT EXPRESS

IMVELO
SAFARI LODGES
CONNECTING PEOPLE AND NATURE



Welcome aboard our unique one of a kind rail car which was custom built in 2015 and is always a highlight activity when staying at Bomani tented lodge or Camelthorn lodge.

SEATBELTS

Seatbelts have been provided for your comfort and safety and we suggest you use them whenever seated.

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE

A guide/host is on board to ensure your journey is comfortable. Drinks and snacks are provided and will be served by your guide/host. There is a chemical flush toilet on board for your convenience.

THE RAIL LINE

This is an historic section of railway line, commissioned by Cecil Rhodes as the backbone of his dream of an empire stretching “from Cape to Cairo.” The section we travel on was built early last century and was the longest straight, flat railway line in the world when first opened, some 120 kms long.

THE TERRAIN

The railway line marks the eastern boundary of the 14 650 square kilometer Hwange National Park and wildlife is free to roam across the line. Opposite the Park, the land is managed by the Forestry Commission, a government parastatal. Vegetation is dominated by the Zambezi teak tree, *Baikiaea plurijuga*, a valuable hardwood which was used for the sleepers when the line was first built. Toward the south, the open grasslands of the Ngamo plains are actually the remnant of an ancient wetland, and the Mbiza palm forest is a feature of special conservation interest.

SAFETY FEATURES

- Commercial freight and passenger traffic still uses this line, under the careful watch of the National Railways of Zimbabwe Traffic Control. Our drivers are in constant contact with NRZ Traffic, and can only proceed when authorised to do so.
- There are sidings approximately every 10 kms which are used in the event that a train needs to pass. Each siding has its own name – ask your host what the names mean!
- Visibility on this long, level section of track is excellent.
- Two drivers are always present on the Express; retired NRZ train drivers with many years of experience were recruited. They are required to undergo regular refresher training to maintain their active licenses.
- The Elephant Express was built in Bulawayo, designed by local engineer Marthinus Nel. Each end has its own independent Toyota engine and gearbox, each providing for forward or reverse travel.

Please relax and enjoy your journey!

