

Stay And Spa At One Of The Seven Natural Wonders Of The World



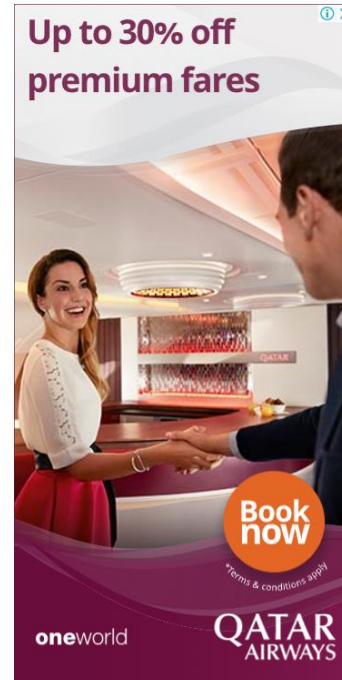
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As The Gear Diva, I bring function and style to active women's lives [FULL BIO](#) ✓

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Victoria Falls, the world's largest single waterfall and one of the 7 Wonders of the World. Photo: Shutterstock



Victoria Falls is one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, and when I visited two years ago, I stayed at the Royal Livingstone Hotel. I loved it, with easy access to the falls on foot, zebras, giraffes, monkeys and other animals roaming the grounds and lots of notable amenities. But this iconic African hotel just got ever better - that is, if like me, you enjoy spa treatments.

The hotel is easily the top choice at this amazing natural attraction, and was built by Sun International in 2001. But since my visit it has changed hands, and is now part of Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas, a standout Thailand-based luxury chain that I wrote about here at Forbes once before because of their dedication to wellness packages, yoga, a heavy focus on spa treatments and offbeat athletic activities like Thai boxing classes - an amazingly intense workout.

One of the best things about the hotel is its location, right on the banks of the mighty Zambezi River, inside Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, named for the local title of the Falls, meaning “The Smoke That Thunders.” It has its own dock, which is very handy as river cruises and boat trips to Stanley Island are popular diversions here, and it has direct access to the Zambia side of Victoria Falls itself, just a 15 minute walk from your room. Now known as the [Royal Livingstone Victoria Falls Zambia Hotel by Anantara](#), the resort has taken further advantage of its one of a kind setting by building three new riverside spa gazebos, giving guests the rare opportunity to enjoy treatments alongside the Zambezi River, to a natural soundtrack of rushing water, birdsongs, and the calls of nearby wildlife. Anantara is known for heavily incorporating local products and tradition to give each resort a distinct sense of place, and options here include romantic side-by-side couples’ treatments, a special foot massage or the new signature Zambezi Massage, using locally made African floral oil and relieving sore muscles with a combination of massage and stretches, incorporating elements of traditional Thai massage.



Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas

One of the brand-new spa treatment rooms overlooking the mighty Zambezi River, the source of Victoria Falls.

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You'll appreciate the pampering, because there is a surprisingly varied slate of activities and things to see and do here, besides, of course, the Falls themselves. About a mile wide and 35 stories tall, it is the world's largest single waterfall, so dramatic and powerful that it fully captures your attention before you even see it, first hearing the sound and seeing the rising cloud of mist, which is visible from miles away - hence "The Smoke that Thunders." The Zambezi River abruptly drops off a cliff on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe, and because the viewing is markedly different from each side, many visitors do both. Each side has a network of hiking trails you can explore, with various viewing points. Livingstone Island, in the middle of the crest of the falls, right at the edge, offers one of the best perspectives, and is a must visit. Here you will also find the infamous Devil's Pool, a sort of jumbo hot tub sized natural rock walled pool at the very precipice, perhaps the world's scariest and most memorable swimming hole, and not a great choice for those afraid of heights. But while the rushing water is magnificent, and well worth the trip, many visitors underestimate the overall appeal of the area and schedule too little time here. There are myriad other ways to experience the Falls and its surroundings, including elephant and horseback tours, helicopter flightseeing, jet boating, sunset or wildlife viewing river cruises, guided mountain bike or ATV (all-terrain vehicle) trips, kayak and canoe trips, game fishing for prized tiger fish, cultural performances, craft markets and even a luxury train wildlife viewing and dinner excursion. Whitewater

rafting on the Zambezi is extremely popular and often rated the world's best one-day raft trip, starting just below the falls and running a long series of crazy looking rapids. There are also conventional African wildlife safaris in nearby national parks on both sides of the river, though these are long day trips and because most people who visit the Falls are tacking onto a trip to South Africa or Botswana, it makes more sense to do the fantastically high-quality game viewing those destinations offer first. But the bottom line is that is possible to base yourself in Livingstone for four or five days, or more, filling your time with nonstop activities, especially with kids in tow. And there is no better place here to stay than at The Royal Livingstone.



The Royal Livingstone was built in traditional British Colonial style architecture; this is one of the bars and restaurants. [-]