

Spark Ventures Transformation Trips

Transformation Trips offer the opportunity for Spark investors to visit and volunteer alongside of our partner organizations around the world. This life changing experience offers participants the opportunity to meet sponsor children and the amazing staff that help to educate and care for them. Transformation Trips are a great chance to see first-hand how their investment in Spark Ventures is making a difference in the lives of vulnerable children we serve. Additionally, a portion of participant trip costs will go directly to the operating budget of the partner organization, helping to create a more sustainable future.

Transformation Trip Process Schedule

December 1, 2009	Applications available online at www.sparkventures.org
January 31, 2010	Application deadline AND \$1000 Deposit due
March 15, 2010	Flights booked and itineraries due to Spark Ventures
April 1, 2010	Consult with physician for shots and malaria medication
May 1, 2010	\$1000 balance due
May 18, 2010	Trip Team Meeting
June 21, 2010	Group arrives in Ndola Zambia
June 30, 2010	Group finishes in Livingstone Zambia

Sample Flight Itineraries

Option 1 \$2,503			
Chicago – Ndola			
Flight 1 American	Depart Chicago	June 19	9:40 pm
	Arrive London	June 20	11:25 am
Flight 2 American	Depart London	June 20	7:10 pm
	Arrive Lusaka	June 21	6:20 am
Flight 3 Proflight	Depart Lusaka	June 21	2:30 am
	Arrive Ndola	June 21	3:15 am
Livingstone - Chicago			
Flight 4 Proflight	Depart Livingstone	June 30	1:00 pm
	Arrive Lusaka	June 30	2:15 pm
Flight 5 American	Depart Lusaka	July 1	8:50 am
	Arrive London	July 1	6:05 pm
Flight 6 American	Depart London	July 2	10:55 am
	Arrive Chicago	July 2	10:20 pm

Option 2 \$3,274			
Chicago – Ndola			
Flight 1 United	Depart Chicago	June 19	9:17 pm
	Arrive London	June 20	11:15 am
Flight 2 S. African	Depart London	June 20	7:00 pm
	Arrive JoBurg	June 20	7:00 am
Flight 3 S. African	Depart Joburg	June 21	9:45 am
	Arrive Ndola	June 21	12:15 pm
Livingstone - Chicago			
Flight 4 Proflight	Depart Livingstone	July 1	1:20 pm
	Arrive JoBurg	July 1	3:10 pm
Flight 5 United	Depart JoBurg	July 1	6:55 pm
	Arrive Frankfurt	July 2	5:25 am
Flight 6 United	Depart Frankfurt	July 2	8:25 am
	Arrive Chicago	July 2	10:30 am

Contact Information

If you have questions related to the 2010 Transformation Trip to Zambia (flights, shots, schedule, etc.) please contact:

Joann Chen
jchen@sparkventures.org | 773-293-6710

Transformation Trip Frequently Asked Questions

How much does the trip cost and is my trip cost tax deductible?

Spark requires a \$2,000 contribution per trip participant and each person is responsible for purchasing flights to/from Zambia. Typically, round trip flights from major U.S. cities range from \$2-3,000 for a total trip cost of \$4,000 to \$5,000. This is a volunteer travel trip, so your \$2,000 contribution to Spark Ventures is considered a donation and you will receive a tax deduction letter. You should check with your tax accountant to ensure the legal/maximum tax-benefit.

What does the \$2,000 go towards? Does any of my trip cost go to support Spark's partner?

Approximately 10% of the trip contribution will go directly to the work of Spark's partner in Zambia and to support the children and projects participants will see and experience on the trip. The remaining contribution goes to cover meals, lodging, ground transportation, excursions and other expenses.

How can I fund my trip?

You may pay for your trip outright, in smaller payments or raise funds on your own to pay for the trip. Each participant is required to provide a \$1,000 deposit by March 1, 2010 and the \$1,000 balance by May 1, 2010.

How do I apply to go on a Transformation Trip with Spark Ventures?

An application form will be available on Spark's website beginning December 1, 2009. The application can be completed online or downloaded and sent in. You can also contact us (info@sparkventures.org or 773-293-6710) and we will mail the application to you.

What will we do on the trip?

Trip participants are given an orientation to Spark's partner Hope Ministries, their programs, staff and facilities. We visit various local markets, historical and cultural landmarks and share meals in the homes of our partners. In addition, volunteers spend time collecting sponsorship information, reading with children at the school and orphanage, helping with current work projects visiting the farming project near Lusaka. The trip ends with an all day safari in Botswana and a visit to Victoria Falls in Livingstone.

What documents will I need to travel and how do I book my flights?

You will need a passport that is valid for 6 months past our trip date and a Zambian tourist visa. Spark can provide assistance in acquiring a passport and a Zambian visa. Each participant is responsible for getting themselves to Ndola, Zambia (NLA) on June 21st and for their return travel departing from Livingstone (LVI) on or after June 30th. Spark can recommend an international travel agent if needed. Your flight itinerary must be provided to Spark by April 15, 2010.

What shots do I need?

In addition to routine shots (such as measles/mumps, polio, tetanus, etc.) it is recommended that you consult your physician and see if you need some or more of the following: rabies, typhoid, hepatitis A, and hepatitis B. More information about recommended shots can also be found on the CDC website under the country of Zambia (www.cdc.gov). You will also be required to receive some malaria medication (most commonly in pill form) from your physician.

Where do we stay during the trip?

Lodging will be in a lodge or "guest house" which are a cross between a bed & breakfast and a small motel. Participants may have a roommate unless requested otherwise. Each room has individual bathrooms with a shower.

Can I meet my sponsor child?

We will do absolutely all that we can to allow you to meet your sponsor child but cannot guarantee that you will meet him/her as it is not uncommon for children/families to be absent from school or their village for extended periods of time.

What is the food and weather like?

The food in Zambia includes chicken, fish, rice, vegetables and nshima (their staple carbohydrate food). We will not drink tap water unless it is boiled and most foods will be fully cooked. The weather in June/July Ndola is usually sunny with cooler temperatures in the evening and ranging from 65-80 F during the day.

What about political unrest, violence and disease?

Since its independence in 1964, Zambia has been known as a peaceful nation and a friend to all its neighboring countries. Zambia has not had a civil war and political violence has been rare. Spark has an evacuation plan in case of emergency and will do everything within our power to keep trip participants safe and healthy. As with travel to any developing country, there are some health risks. Participants should take their malaria medication, use hand sanitizer frequently, and avoid physical contact with children or others who have open wounds or seem to be sick. Most of Spark's volunteer travelers have remained healthy during their travel to Zambia.