



## WILDERNESS HEAD GUIDE – HWANGE SAFARI CAMPS

### PETER GAVA

Peter Gava is a Zimbabwean safari guide, mentor, and Head Guide for Wilderness in Hwange National Park. With nearly four decades of experience across Southern and East Africa, he is known for calm leadership, deep ecological knowledge, and a commitment to training future generations of guides.

Born in Gweru, a small town in central Zimbabwe, Peter spent his early years between his place of birth and Bulawayo, as well as in the villages of Gokwe and Gwanda. He grew up loving wildlife and nature, always fascinated by the smaller animals too, and so his career path was set from a young age.

Peter began his career teaching Environmental Science before spending many years working with Zimbabwe's Department of National Parks (ZimParks) Terrestrial Research, where he gained invaluable ecological knowledge and field experience. He later received a scholarship to study at the College of African Wildlife Management in Tanzania, earning a Diploma in Wildlife Management. Returning home, he completed Zimbabwe's demanding and highly respected professional proficiency examinations to qualify as a Professional Guide.

Since qualifying, Peter has guided across Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Namibia, building a reputation for depth of knowledge, calm leadership, and an ability to connect guests meaningfully to place. He joined Wilderness in 2018 as Head Guide for the company's Hwange National Park camps, a role that felt like a natural homecoming, given his long-standing association with Wilderness through his earlier research work with ZimParks.

For Peter, Hwange National Park is more than a wilderness area – it is a living monument. Its ancient Kalahari sands, fossil drainage lines, rich biodiversity, and deep human history make it one of Africa's most rewarding places to guide. He considers it a privilege to represent both Hwange and Wilderness, and in 2025 was recognised for this commitment when he was awarded Zimbabwe's Guide of the Year – an honour he regards as a shared achievement for the entire Wilderness family and the many guests who have travelled with him.

A highly respected Professional Walking Guide and mentor, Peter was seconded to Wilderness Magashi in Rwanda's Akagera National Park at the end of 2020 to serve as Senior Guide and Trainer. Alongside guiding guests, he focused on developing junior guides Alphonse Ntabana and Innocent Tuyisenge, passing on not only technical skills, but values of patience, humility, and ethical guiding. Peter believes deeply in knowledge transfer – “passing the stick” to the next generation to ensure guiding excellence endures.

Back in Zimbabwe, Peter's passion and influence continue through his son Kingsley, who is now a guide at Davison's Camp in Hwange.

Above all, Peter embodies Wilderness culture: genuine, professional, ethical, and deeply human. For him, guiding is not just about wildlife encounters, but about creating trust, shared moments, and once-in-a-lifetime experiences that stay with guests long after they leave the bush.



## WILDERNESS ZAMBEZI PROFESSIONAL GUIDE NYENGEDZAYI KAZINGIZI

Shaped by a childhood spent in Zimbabwe's rural landscapes, Nyenge's journey from herding cattle to Head Guide at Wilderness Ruckomechi spans decades across the country's wild places. A respected leader, photographer and mentor, he believes guiding is a calling rooted in deep respect for nature.

Born in the rural community of Uzumba in Zimbabwe's Mashonaland East, Nyenge developed an early and instinctive connection to the natural world. From as young as nine, long days spent herding cattle and goats through the surrounding bush became formative experiences, quietly nurturing a deep respect for wildlife and wild places. Though the idea of wildlife guiding as a profession was largely unknown in his community at the time, these early moments laid the foundation for a lifelong calling.

His passion was further strengthened through his involvement in the Cub Scouts and later the Scouts movement, where he balanced academic studies with bushcraft skills. Progressing through to Advanced Scout level, he earned national recognition and trophies.

In 1997, alongside a group of like-minded friends – many of whom are now professional guides – he pursued his guiding qualifications. This led to him obtaining his Learner Professional Guide licence the following year. Nyenge completed his theory exams in February 2000 and passed his practical exams in October 2001.

Over the years, Nyenga has guided extensively across Zimbabwe's major wilderness areas, including Hwange, Gonarezhou, Chilo Gorge, Matusadona and Mana Pools. He's worked with a wide range of operators, led private groups, and shared the field with some of Africa's most legendary safari guides – experiences that profoundly shaped his approach to guiding.

In late 2014, he was invited to assist at Wilderness Ruckomechi. Shortly thereafter, he was offered a permanent position with Wilderness, officially joining the company in March 2015. Since then, he has been a seasonal resident guide at Ruckomechi, where his leadership, experience and calm authority in the field saw him appointed Head Guide in 2019—a role he continues to hold today.

Alongside guiding, Nyenge has developed a strong passion for wildlife photography. In 2016, his work was showcased at Wild Shots in Cape Town, and he later served as a brand ambassador for Olympus.

Deeply committed to conservation, education and mentorship, he finds great fulfilment in sharing his knowledge with guests. He believes guiding is more than a career – it is a calling rooted in respect, awareness and the ability to truly read the natural world.

Looking ahead, his greatest wish is a simple one: to one day take his grandchildren camping and show them real wildlife, experienced first-hand, rather than through screens or photographs – a legacy grounded in lived connection to the wild.

**About Wilderness:**

Founded over 40 years ago, Wilderness is a world-leading conservation and hospitality company, offering immersive journeys to a range of environments in Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Wilderness is part of a global collective working to conserve the world's iconic unfenced, untamed and unpredictable wilderness areas. With more than 60 exceptional camps and lodges, Wilderness helps protect some 2.3 million hectares (6 million acres) of land across its eight African destinations. Its goal – to double that by 2030. Four decades on, the company's purpose is stronger than ever: To increase the world's wilderness, together.

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