

Malawi Embassy in Lusaka is very friendly and helpful and will issue visas on the spot. Malawi has strong views regarding reporters so ensure pax occupations do not include these.

The northern border of Malawi has one exit only. This is at Chitipa and you have to re-enter Zambia and obtain visas again unless you have multiple entry visas. There is no road direct to Tanzania and so Tunduma is obligatory.

There are some new roads and other all weather roads under construction. The road from Karonga to Chitipa is still dirt and very hilly and would be very difficult and dangerous in the wet. Since June of this year the border at Chitipa has been closed for incomings into Malawi but exit is ok. Reason is unsure but could be temporary because of a part conference being held at Mzuzu.

There are good tar roads from Lusaka through to Lilongwe and north to Kasungu. All along lake is dirt except short bits of tar. Nkhotakota north 50 kms and Nkhata Bay to Mzuzu then new tar Mzuzu to Karonga.

Timings were: 1½ days Lusaka to border at Mahinji Chepata in Zambia - could get water and diesel and a small market, but not good.

Border officials both sides were friendly but Malawi side held us for 3 hours because of our supposed journalist. In the end they cleared us through Blantyre Head Office.

3 hr drive from the border to Lilongwe, the impressive new capital - rest of town old and small. Good market and water. Banks open Sat. morning but very slow. After here nowhere to spend money.

We went from Lilongwe north along Kasungu road for 30 kms then turned off via Dawa to Nkhotakota and camped in game reserve. Road is dirt, hilly and slow but in fair condition.

Water and small market (poor) in Nkhotakota. Good view of lake.

Along lakeside north of here. Some very nice bays and scenery - lake good for swimming.

Road from Nkhata Bay to Mzuzu very steep hills and slow climb to 1200 metres.

Mzuzu back to lake fast tar for first hour then have to climb over mountains with very steep, slow descent to finally reach lake again at Chiweta. Again, some good campsites and sandy beaches up to Karonga.

Karonga - small market, no water. Bank changed maximum of 20 Kwacha back to hard currency. Depends on their availability of currency but generally very helpful.

Karonge to Chitipa dirt road very hilly and took 4 hours. Border quick and efficient.

Border to Tunduma 2 hour driver and came out 30 yards from entrance gate to Customs compound.

Distances: Lusaka - border 650 kms 1½ days

Border - Lake. 300 kms 1 day with 3 hours in Lilongwe.

Along lake via Mzuzu to Chiweta. 400 kms. A long day's drive.

Chitweta to border. 230 kms. Camped inside Zambia.