

Annual Choir Festival in the Nkwichi Manda Wilderness on the shores of Lake Malawi

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Preparations for the annual **Nkwichi Lodge** Manda Wilderness Choir Festival kicked off in the lakeshore village of Cobue at around 7am October 27th, with visitors coming on foot and boat from over 50km away. The event was hosted with the goal of bringing the sixteen communities of the **Manda Wilderness** together.

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The night was full of anticipation and excitement as each group received choir training prior to the start of the festival and the vibrant voices lit up the day, showcasing their talents.

Twelve choirs; comprising of twenty enthusiastic Nyanja voices each, competed for first, second and third prizes in an evening of joyful celebration, in front of thousands of eager onlookers. A very heartfelt congratulations to Mala Choir for winning first prize, a five song recording session in a nearby beach town in Mozambique, to Mcondece for taking second prize, a video exchange with a choir in Canada and a folder for each choir member; to Chigoma Choir, who walked away with third place, twenty recorders, instruction book and a pitch pipe; and to Andrew Kaiwala, the winning choirmaster, who took home a gleaming tambourine, undoubtedly to be used during countless Anglican church meetings in Mala Village!



After enjoying the sounds of the twelve choirs perform their best pieces, the competition wrapped up with a triumphant piece called 'Nyanja Mama' performed by everyone. The voices of the choirs rang out so beautifully that once was not enough and so on the second rendition the whole crowd joined in with the melody! The choirmasters then took their place on stage where they sang and danced to several songs led by the band.

The event overall was a huge success and enjoyed by everyone!

Nkwichi Lodge is a hidden, hand-built lodge located in the north-western corner of Mozambique, on the eastern side of Lake Malawi (or Lake Niassa as it is called on the Mozambican side). Nkwichi Lodge has been recognized as a pioneering eco-tourism establishment and has been awarded many accolades, including Africa's Leading Responsible Tourism Company and Best Small Hotel/Accommodation at the Virgin Responsible Tourism Awards. The most recent achievements include the Overall Winner and Best in Community Empowerment of the Kutoa Community Impact Awards 2012, as well as the Condé Nast Traveler World Saver Award in the 'Doing it All' category for small resorts 2012.