

THE MAGIC OF AFRICA!  
YOUR PERSONAL GUIDEBOOK  
ON PREPARING FOR  
YOUR SAFARI




PREPARED FOR  
OKC ZOO TRAVELERS



Thank you for traveling with Safari Professionals! We have created this Safari Guidebook to assist you as you prepare for your African adventures. Furthermore, you will receive additional information specific to the countries you will visit. Knowing what to expect and being completely prepared are two of the most important factors that will enable you to thoroughly enjoy your explorations of Africa.

Please take the time to review your Safari Guide now and be sure to let us know if you have any questions. Then, a couple of weeks before your departure, we suggest you review this again to make sure you are fully prepared for your safari.

Again, thank you. I look forward to assisting you as you prepare to explore Africa and her amazing wildlife destinations.



Tom LaRock  
Founder & CEO (Chief Exploration Officer)  
Safari Professionals



The health of everyone in the Safari Professionals family, including our travelers, our teams in Africa, and our staff continues to be a top priority. Our safari partners in Africa have instituted stringent and practical health protocols that have been designed in accordance with the best global practices to ensure a safe environment for everyone. New operational procedures, such as frequent sanitizing and exclusive usage of safari vehicles, along with preventative measures, including the wearing of masks and appropriate distancing, have been put in place to address the concerns our travelers, our staff, and our teams may have surrounding Covid-19.

The safaris designed and conducted by Safari Professionals have always been, by their very nature, physically distanced and private experiences. With these carefully considered protocols in place, we trust that our travelers will be able to relax and thoroughly enjoy the magical luxury of open spaces and the sense of freedom that traveling on safari in Africa brings.

Due to the changing nature of regulations and services, we have not included Covid-related information in your safari guidebook. You will receive updated information, as it becomes available. If you have any questions, please contact us.



## **SECTION ONE: BEFORE DEPARTURE**

Your safari guide is divided into two sections.

Please read Section One: Before Departure now— as it contains important information that you will need before you leave.

Section Two: On Safari contains details and reference materials that will help you during your safari. Please make sure you review it before your safari departs.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

### **CHECKLIST: Before departure**

- ☐ **Please read this entire guide before your departure.** It contains important information to help you prepare for your safari. We recommend you bring this safari guide with you on safari.
- ☐ **Get a passport or check your passport.** If you already have one, make sure it will remain valid for at least six months **after** the date of your return from Africa. If it doesn't, please get a new passport now. Countries will not issue the required admission visas if your passport expires within six months of your departure from Africa.
  - ⇒ **We suggest that you have at least two blank pages in your passport for visas, entries and departures.** Several countries in Africa require two blank visa pages. Please be aware that the endorsement pages at the back of your passport may not be used for visas and entry/exit stamps.
- ☐ **Obtain the required visas:** You will receive additional information regarding any travel visas that you may need for the countries you will be visiting. Most countries have an online system allowing you to obtain visa approval in advance.
- ☐ **At the airport.** Your international airline is required to check your passport, prior to your departure. Occasionally, airline staff may not be familiar with visa requirements, and they may initially refuse to let you board the aircraft if they do not see a current travel visa in your passport. Showing them your visa approval should be accepted in place of a visa in your passport. If the airline staff does not accept the visa application, ask to speak with a supervisor and suggest they check the embassy's website of the country you will visit.
- ☐ **Please talk with your medical professional and/or a professional at a travel health clinic about recommended health precautions.** This safari guidebook provides you with important information on the various precautions you may choose to take, but it is ultimately up to you to consult with your own medical professionals to determine your personal precautionary health measures.

Please note that, if you travel to more than one African country, certain vaccinations may be required. You will receive additional information if any vaccinations are required by the countries you will visit.
- ☐ **Yellow Fever:** Some countries require proof of yellow fever inoculation. However, recent changes have reduced the number of countries with these requirements. However, these requirements can and often do change and enforcement at border entries can be variable. If you have proof of yellow fever inoculation, we recommend you keep your WHO International



Inoculation Certificate with your passport at all times.

- ☐ **Plastic bags:** Some countries have banned single-use plastic bags, including the bags that contain duty-free purchases. The bans are primarily intended to eliminate the plastic bags used at retail stores. If this applies to your safari, you'll receive additional information.
- ☐ **Arrange for transportation to and from your hometown.** Safari Professionals does not make international flight arrangements.
- ☐ **Please be sure to send us a copy of your international air confirmations as soon as you received them.** We need to provide your flights details to our team in Africa in order to coordinate all your arrangements.

## **DOCUMENTS**

### **PASSPORT**

Please visit the U.S. State Department's website for complete information.

[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

- ☐ If you have a passport, make sure that it will remain valid for at least **six months after the date of your return** from your safari. **Your airline may have been instructed to not let you board your flight if this requirement is not met.**
- ☐ If you have changed your name (are newly married, for instance) be sure that we have your name as it appears on your passport. Your safari arrangements must be confirmed using your passport name. Please note that, if a name change is required, the airlines and other providers of services will charge a fee, which will be added to your safari balance.
- ☐ If you have a passport that has expired within the last 15 years, or one that will not remain valid for at least six months after the date of your return from Africa, you will need to renew it. Renewal requires a renewal application, two passport photos, your latest passport, and payment of the renewal fee.
- ☐ If you are getting a U.S. passport for the first time, or if your old one expired more than 15 years ago, you will need to provide proof of citizenship, proof of identity and two 2"x2" photos. For complete details, please visit this website:  
[http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first\\_830.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_830.html)
- ☐ If you are applying for your passport, please make sure to leave enough time to obtain any travel visas you may need.
- ☐ Please check to determine if you have **at least two blank visa pages** for the travel visas and entry/exit stamps you may obtain. Endorsement pages cannot be counted as visa pages. If you do not have a minimum of two blank pages, we strongly recommend you obtain a new passport.
- ☐ You may use a professional passport/visa service to assist you with any passport-related transaction. An additional fee will be charged by the passport/visa service. You may use any service you wish. We have found The Travel Documents Company (<https://www.traveldocs.com/>) to be highly effective in providing personalized assistance with passport and visa services.

Passport agencies of the U.S. Department of State are located in several cities and there are over 7,000

locations which accept passport applications throughout the U.S. Please visit this website to locate one near you: <http://iafdb.travel.state.gov/>

If you require expedited service, we strongly recommend you use a professional passport/visa service. Please note that additional time may be needed to obtain visas. If you apply for expedited service directly to the State Department, be sure to specify your departure date on your application. This is very important: passports are processed by the State Department in the order of departure date. Application forms that simply arrive by overnight services do not receive expedited treatment. The State Department charges an additional fee to expedite the processing of your passport.

Loss or theft of a valid passport is a serious matter and should be reported in writing immediately to Passport Services, Department of State, Washington, D.C., or to the nearest passport agency. If you are abroad, it should be reported to the nearest U.S. consulate or embassy. We strongly suggest you make a photocopy of your passport and carry the photocopy with you, separate from your passport. In case of loss, this will help expedite the paperwork for obtaining a new one. In addition, we require that you provide Safari Professionals with a copy of the photo page of your passport, so we may book your hotel and transportation reservation in Africa.

If you experience any problem in obtaining a passport, please call us and we'll assist you.

## **WHAT TO TAKE**

### **DOCUMENTS**

Before your departure, we will provide you with additional information that will help you on safari. Take this safari guide and other information with you. **DO NOT put any important documents in the luggage that you check through.** Keep these items with you at all times in your carry-on luggage. And don't forget your passport!

### **LUGGAGE AND PACKING**

Most people tend to take too much clothing and gear on safari. Pack light and plan on taking only one medium soft-sided suitcase or duffel bag. The size limitation is required so that all bags can easily fit into your safari vehicle or light aircraft. Both have a limited amount of space for luggage. Plan on using your carry-on as your day bag during game drives.

Laundry service is available at all hotels, lodges, permanent tented camps, and private mobile camps, allowing you to bring as little clothing as possible.

Safety rules limit the weight of luggage on light aircraft flights. You will receive additional information about any weight requirements that apply to your safari.

International airlines have varying weight allowances for your checked luggage and may charge an extra fee for more than one checked piece of luggage. Please check with your airline for their allowance.

One of our travelers taught us an easy way to check the weight of our bags using a household scale. Simply weigh yourself and then, weigh yourself holding the bag. The difference between the two is the weight of the bag.

**Keep one carry-on bag in your possession at all times with important items such as medications, tickets, passport, etc.**

Although the U.S. Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) publishes guidelines regarding the dimensions of carry-on luggage, each country and each airline establishes their own guidelines.

**Please check with all your international airlines now to determine if your carry-on luggage meets their specific requirements.** And we suggest you check again, just before your departure, to ensure their policies have not changed.

**Some international airlines restrict carry-on luggage to one piece and do not allow an extra piece such as a purse or computer case. Again, please check with your airline to determine their carry-on allowance and policies.**

The U.S. Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) provides the following information regarding luggage:

“Please check with your airline for their specific policies on carry-on and checked bags, including the number of bags allowed and size/weight restrictions. To help you and your bags get through security quickly, here's a packing tip: Many harmless items, when packed in a less than orderly fashion, might look like threats in the X-ray and require additional screening. So if you're packing electronics, be sure to wrap the cords tightly. Also, pack your items in layers: a layer of clothes, a layer of electronics, a layer of clothes, and then a layer of other items. This gives an officer a better view and will reduce the chances of your bag needing additional screening.”

We strongly recommend you consider securing your checked baggage with locks approved by the U.S. Transportation Safety Administration (TSA). These locks provide security but allow the TSA to open your baggage if it is chosen for inspection, without destroying your locks. TSA approved locks can be purchased just about anywhere padlocks or travel items are sold. Additional details are available at this TSA website: <http://www.tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips>.

Please use the large, easy-to-spot luggage tags provided by Safari Professionals. When our safari travelers use the same tags, it makes it easier for guides, lodge staff members and drivers to identify the pieces belonging to you. We recommend you place a copy of your itinerary inside your checked luggage in the unlikely event that your baggage does not arrive at your destination. You may also wish to attach an additional tag to your checked luggage that includes your flight schedule.



## CLOTHING

Once again, travel light. Casual wash-and-wear summer clothing is appropriate for your safari. Remember, although you are traveling to Africa, some of the locations you may visit will be at high altitudes, where it may be quite chilly in the morning and evenings when the sun is down.

Temperatures can range from the mid-40s in the early morning to the mid-80s in the afternoon, although lower and higher temperatures can occur. Dressing in layers will make your morning game drives more comfortable. Brief showers can occur anytime, even when traveling in the “dry” seasons.

During the day, wear pants, jeans, shorts, or a lightweight skirt, and lightweight cotton or cotton blend top, preferably khaki, tan, or another neutral color, so as not to startle those animals and birds which have color vision. Bring a heavy sweater, turtleneck, fleece top or summer jacket for the early mornings and evenings, and for night game drives. Please **DO NOT** bring camouflage clothing, which is reserved only for the military. Pack a swimsuit if you wish to use lodge swimming pools, although they can be quite chilly.

Laundry service is available at each location. The staff will give you instructions on sending clothes to be washed and they will generally be returned the next day. For cultural reasons, laundry service for underwear may not be offered. Occasionally, the weather may not provide ideal drying conditions and your pressed laundry may be returned slightly damp. We simply hang any damp items up and let them continue to dry. We suggest carrying a small container of powdered detergent (such as Woolite) for rinsing out your more delicate items yourself.

Traditional khaki safari clothes are not required but many of our travelers tell us that dressing the part adds to the fun of their safari and simplifies the choices of what to take. Here are some websites that feature safari-type clothing, as well as other travel items:

<http://www.tilley.com> In addition to clothing, they have great hats.

<http://www.magellans.com> A great source for anything you need for travel.

<http://www.orvis.com> Classic sporting clothing and accessories.

<http://www.cabelas.com> Their “Serengeti” clothing is a good bargain.

<http://www.travelsmith.com> Another source for travel needs.

<http://www.sunprecautions.com> A great resource for those sensitive to the sun.

Please keep in mind that airplanes can be quite cool during overnight international flights. Dress so you will be warm and comfortable during your flight.

## FOOTWEAR

Comfort is the key. Any good walking shoes or hiking shoes are usually sufficient unless you have specific ankle issues that may require higher top shoes, as the ground can be uneven. Avoid open-toed shoes or sandals for the walks, or you will find yourself collecting a lot of sand, dirt or a needle-sharp acacia thorn. For days in the vehicle, comfortable shoes that are easy to take on and off are ideal since you need to take off your shoes before standing on the seats to take photos.

## HEADGEAR

We strongly recommend a wide brimmed soft cloth hat for protection from the intense sun. It can be folded and put in a pocket or bag and is less likely to blow off than a stiffer-brimmed hat.



## CAMERAS

Virtually everyone who wishes to take photographs on their safari uses a digital camera, mobile phone or tablet. Most people find that a digital camera with a zoom lens rated between 200 to 300mm allows them the greatest flexibility in taking wildlife photos. The zoom feature is handy for framing your photo and the longer focal length will bring your subjects closer to you.

You will be able to charge your camera batteries at each place you stay. Most of the camera chargers we have seen recently are dual voltage units - they can be used with either the 110-volt system we use in the USA or the 220-volt system you will find in Africa. Please check yours to make sure it will take 220 volts. If it doesn't, you will need to bring a voltage converter, which can generally be found at any store that sells luggage and other travel items. Please see the following section regarding the electrical plug adaptors needed in Africa.

Digital cameras store their image files on memory cards. It's easy to fill up a card when using a digital camera, so we suggest you bring more than one. Some travelers bring a dedicated hard drive to store image files, allowing the cards to be reused throughout the safari.

**If you purchase new photographic equipment for your safari, please test it to make sure it is functioning properly.** And **be sure to bring extra batteries**, even if your equipment uses rechargeable batteries. Batteries can run out of power while you are on a game drive and a spare will ensure that you won't miss a great photo opportunity. It is unlikely you will be able to purchase another battery while on safari.

## ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

The current in Africa is usually around 220 volts, 50 cycles, so if you have American electrical equipment you want to use, such as a mobile phone or a razor, be sure your equipment can be switched to 220 volts or take along a voltage transformer. Most American equipment operates on 60 cycles, so you may find that appliances with moving parts will operate at less than their normal speed unless they have been modified internally to work at either 50 or 60 cycles.

You will need adapters to slip onto your appliance plugs so that they will fit into the electrical sockets in Africa. You will receive additional information about the adapters needed for your safari.

For more information about power systems around the world, please visit this website - <https://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/>.

Please do not bring an electrical hair dryer or curling iron on safari. Many of the places you will stay use solar power or a generator to provide power and the electrical system may be inadequate for the power demands of your hair dryer or curling iron. Hair driers that are compatible with the local power system may be provided in your room.

## **MISCELLANEOUS TIPS**

- In some places, the lack of recent rain may create dusty conditions which some travelers find annoying. If dust bothers you, we suggest you bring along a bandanna that you can wear over your mouth and nose or consider the type of masks worn by surgeons (found at pharmacies) or painters (found at hardware stores).
- Everyone who goes on a wildlife safari should have his or her own pair of binoculars. If you don't already have some, the purchase of a good pair of binoculars is a wise investment. Binoculars are an essential tool for being able to see birds and smaller animals, and to watch the behaviors of animals at a distance. They are also useful for being able to see exactly how a giraffe twists its 12 inch-long tongue around a thorny acacia branch to strip off the leaves or to have a close-up look at the way an elephant manipulates a tuft of grass before stuffing it into its mouth.

Choosing the right binoculars can seem a confusing challenge. Most of our travelers have found binoculars ranging in size from 7 x 35 to 10 x 50 useful on safari. Anything more powerful is likely to reduce your field of vision and exaggerate any movement. The first figure of the binoculars' rating indicates the magnification power of the lenses. A value of 7 brings the image of the item you are looking at 7 times closer. The second figure, such as 35, specifies the diameter of the objective lens in millimeters, which affects the amount of light entering the binoculars. There are other factors that affect the image you may see but they are beyond the scope of this guide.

We recommend you try several types of binoculars to find the one that is right for you. The staffs of photographic and sporting goods stores are generally very knowledgeable and can help you choose. Many of the smaller binoculars provide a good trade-off between their physical size and their effectiveness.

- Roads in Africa can be quite bumpy and game viewing will often take you over rough terrain. We recommend women consider wearing a sports bra or other strong support for comfort during the drives.
- Although we are usually traveling during the dry season, rain storms can occur at any time. The lodges generally provide umbrellas if they are needed.



## **CHECKLIST: CLOTHING**

- ☐ Light weight cotton or cotton blend clothing in neutral colors (avoid dark blue clothing which may attract insects during daylight hours)
- ☐ 2 or 3 short sleeve shirts or
- ☐ 1 or 2 long sleeved shirts – most travelers find a total of 3 or 4 shirts to be sufficient
- ☐ 2 or 3 pairs of pants and/or shorts and skirts
- ☐ Belt
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Windbreaker/sweater/sweatshirt/fleece (early morning game drives can be chilly!)
- ☐ Underwear and socks
- ☐ Swimsuit (if you wish to use available pools)
- ☐ Wide brimmed hat for sun protection
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes or light-weight hiking boots
- ☐ Flip-flops or shower shoes
- ☐ Sports bra

## **CHECKLIST: MISCELLANEOUS**

- ☐ Portable external battery to charge your phone
- ☐ Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo (if you wish to use your favorite), shaving cream, razors, deodorant, comb, tampons, etc.)
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Small flashlight
- ☐ Extra batteries for the flashlight and other items using batteries
- ☐ Pre-moistened towelettes or baby wipes
- ☐ Facial tissues
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Sunscreen and lip balm (A minimum SPF of 30 is recommended)
- ☐ Powdered laundry detergent (for your personal delicate items)
- ☐ Transformer for converting 120 volts to 220 volts, if your appliance does not operate on dual voltage.
- ☐ Electrical adapter plugs
- ☐ Security pouch for carrying your passport and money
- ☐ At least one extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
- ☐ A copy of your eyeglass prescription in case you lose or break your glasses
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Daypack (which doubles as your carryon luggage)
- ☐ Medications for diarrhea, colds, sunburn, upset stomach, etc.
- ☐ Basic first-aid kit (band-aids, antiseptic ointment, aspirin, etc.)
- ☐ Prescription medications you may need
- ☐ Written copy of your prescriptions with the chemical name of the medication (Keep this separate from your medications)
- ☐ Dust mask or bandanna / eye drops for dust irritation
- ☐ Small notebook or journal and pens
- ☐ Sewing kit, rubber bands, duct tape
- ☐ Watch and/or travel clock

- ☐ Your favorite snacks that are not subject to heat damage (nuts, hard candies, mints, granola bars)
- ☐ TSA approved luggage locks
- ☐ Sports drink hydration tablets for staying hydrated and quickly replenishing trace elements (available at sporting goods stores)
- ☐ This safari guidebook
- ☐ Paperback books, digital reader or other reading materials. Travelers often trade books on safari.

## **CHECKLIST: IN YOUR CARRY-ON OR ON YOUR PERSON**

- ☐ Passport, COVID-19 vaccination card, airline confirmations, frequent flyer card
- ☐ Copies of your travel visa authorizations
- ☐ Credit card, cash (due to security concerns, do not use debit cards in Africa)
- ☐ Medications (do not pack medications in checked luggage)
- ☐ Written copy of your prescriptions with the generic names of the medication (Keep this separate from your medications)
- ☐ Spare pair of prescription glasses or contact lenses if you wear them. If you wear contacts, we suggest you also bring along a pair of glasses. Eye drops.
- ☐ A copy of your eyeglass prescription in case you lose or break your glasses
- ☐ Cameras, digital memory cards, extra batteries, lens cleaning items
- ☐ Photocopy of your passport photo page (Keep this separate from your passport)
- ☐ Ear plugs, neck rest, eye shade for your overnight flights
- ☐ Spare set of underwear & socks in the unlikely event your luggage is delayed
- ☐ Something to read during your flights



## **MONEY**

### **CURRENCY & CREDIT CARDS**

US dollars are widely accepted, so do not worry about changing money. Note that you must bring the newer bills with the “big heads”, and they should still be relatively crisp. Older (issued before 2006), worn, torn, or marked bills (with even a pencil mark) are often not accepted.

Most lodge and safari camp gift shops, as well as larger “curio” shops accept MasterCard and Visa. Be sure to ask if they accept the cards. Some shops may add the processing fee charged by the credit card company to your total. That said, there may be places where credit cards will not be accepted so having cash in varying denominations from \$1 to \$20 may be useful. American Express and Discover cards are generally not accepted and most security experts do not recommend using debit cards in Africa. We no longer recommend purchasing traveler's checks because almost no one accepts them anymore.

As when traveling anywhere, keep your money and valuables with you at all times. Never leave them in your room or unattended in vehicles.

### **TIPPING**

Tips can be a significant portion of income for safari guides, as well as for the staff at lodges and safari camps. Tipping is always optional but, if you feel you have received excellent service, please consider tipping. Here are some suggestions for tipping:

Safari guide - \$10-20 per day per traveler

Lodge/camp staff - \$5-10 per day per traveler

You may tip your guides and camp staff using U.S. dollars. You may tip your guides on the morning of your departure. There will usually be a tip box or slot in the reception area to provide tips, which will be divided among the staff.

## **HEALTH**

### **GENERAL HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS**

Before you leave for an extended vacation, especially one to an international destination, we recommend you consult your physician and a professional travel clinic. Make the doctor's appointment **no less than eight weeks before your departure**. You may need some prescriptions, inoculations (some of which need to be taken well before your departure), and perhaps some special advice that relates to your own physical condition. If you haven't had a physical examination recently, you should get one. Discuss your itinerary and describe your planned activities with your doctor if you have any questions about your fitness.

**If you have any medical condition that requires special care or medications, let us know.**

In addition to getting specific inoculations and drugs, it is a good idea to bring along some general medicines as well. A broad-spectrum antibiotic is advisable. Be aware that some antibiotics (like tetracycline) can cause hypersensitivity to the sun. Diarrhea medicine is also advisable, as is medication for itches or rashes.

Be sure to bring enough of the prescription medicines that you are currently taking. Pack your medications



in your carry-on luggage, not in your checked luggage. And don't take just enough in your carry-on luggage for the flight, assuming you will retrieve the rest when you get to your destination. Occasionally, checked luggage is delayed, and you could find yourself without medication. Carry a written copy of the prescriptions for any such medication you need, including its chemical (generic) name.

If you have any special condition or allergy that might possibly require attention overseas, have your physician write a letter describing the nature of the condition and the treatment - send a copy to us and carry the letter with you. If you should happen to need medical care away from home, your temporary physician will be able to treat you more efficiently and effectively.

If you have severe allergies that may require the use of an Epi pen, please be sure to bring them.

## **DENTAL CHECK-UP**

It's a good idea to see your dentist a few weeks before departure. A broken or lost filling can be very aggravating while traveling. You might also consider taking along one of the commercially available dental emergency kits. Such kits allow you to replace lost fillings, cement crowns or caps, and alleviate toothaches. Ask your dentist or pharmacist for a recommendation.

## **HEALTH PRECAUTIONS FOR AFRICA**

There are certain health precautions that you should take for your visit. It is beyond the scope of this publication to advise you of precisely what you need, as requirements change, and they vary among individuals. It is up to each traveler to consult his or her physician to get specific advice.

You will be traveling in a part of the world where medical care is not well developed. You will often be far from any medical facility or doctor, and it could take several hours to get help. Although emergency medical evacuation service is available in Africa, it is sometimes not possible to contact them immediately. Although simple first aid may be available and there are some simple medical facilities in parks and reserves, your guides, drivers, and other personnel cannot be relied upon for any but the most basic first aid.

## **MEDICAL INSURANCE**

Any additional expenses resulting from medical conditions or emergencies are your responsibility. Please review the details of your travel insurance coverage and check with your insurance agent to make sure that you are adequately covered while traveling overseas.

## **INOCULATIONS**

You may need to get certain inoculations before you leave. Requirements vary from country to country. Please consult your physician or a professional travel clinic about your personal needs. If any inoculations are required for the destinations you will visit, you will receive additional information. You'll find the CDC's recommendations here: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm>.

## **MALARIA PREVENTION**

Malaria is present in many destinations throughout Africa. In consultation with a medical professional, you should consider taking an anti-malaria drug before, during, and after your travel. In addition, there are other precautions that you can take to help prevent this disease.

All travelers to malarial areas of the world are advised to use an appropriate drug regimen and personal protection measures to prevent malaria; however, travelers should be informed that regardless of methods

employed, malaria still may be contracted. Malaria symptoms can develop as early as eight days after initial exposure and as late as several months after departure. Travelers should understand that malaria can be treated effectively early in the course of the disease, but delay of therapy can have serious or even fatal consequences. Individuals who have symptoms of malaria should seek prompt medical evaluation as soon as possible.

**Anti-malaria drugs:** A number of drugs are available for the prevention of malaria. The drug that is currently being recommended for U.S. travelers to Africa by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is **Malarone** (chemical name: atovaquone/proguanil). Because each person's tolerance for medication is different, consult your primary physician or a professional travel clinic about the risks and benefits of taking Malarone and other malaria preventatives. To review CDC's detailed recommendations for countries in Africa, please visit their website at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm>.

**Other precautions:** Experts agree that the best way to avoid malaria is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. The mosquitos that carry malaria only feed after dark, with 10:00 PM to 2:00 AM being their most active time. Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts after dark. Use insect repellent at night for any parts of your body that are not covered by clothing or bedding. Use a mosquito net if it is provided.

For the prevention of malaria, the CDC provides detailed information about skin-applied repellants at their website: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2020/noninfectious-health-risks/mosquitoes-ticks-and-other-arthropods>

The following is copied from the above website for your convenience:

CDC has evaluated information published in peer-reviewed scientific literature and data available from EPA to identify several types of EPA-registered products that provide repellent activity sufficient to help people reduce the bites of disease-carrying insects.

Products containing the following active ingredients typically provide reasonably long-lasting protection:

**DEET** (chemical name: N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide or N,N-diethyl-3-methyl-benzamide). Products containing DEET include, but are not limited to, Off!, Cutter, Sawyer, and Ultrathon.

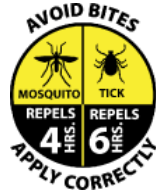
**Picaridin** (KBR 3023 [Bayrepel] and icaridin outside the US; chemical name: 2-(2-hydroxyethyl)-1-piperidinecarboxylic acid 1-methylpropyl ester). Products containing picaridin include, but are not limited to, Cutter Advanced, Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus, and Autan (outside the United States).

**Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or PMD** (chemical name: para-menthane-3,8-diol), the synthesized version of OLE. Products containing OLE and PMD include, but are not limited to, Repel and Off! Botanicals. This recommendation refers to EPA-registered products containing the active ingredient OLE (or PMD). CDC does not recommend using “pure” oil of lemon eucalyptus (essential oil not formulated) as a repellent. It has not undergone similar, validated testing for safety and efficacy and is not registered with EPA as an insect repellent.

**IR3535** (chemical name: 3-[N-butyl-N-acetyl]-aminopropionic acid, ethyl ester). Products containing IR3535 include, but are not limited to, Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus Expedition and SkinSmart.

**2-undecanone** (chemical name: methyl nonyl ketone). The product BioUD contains 2-undecanone. EPA characterizes the active ingredients DEET and picaridin as “conventional” repellents. Biopesticide repellents—OLE, PMD, IR3535, and 2-undecanone—are derived from, or are synthetic versions of, natural materials.

The above CDC website also provides information about the length of time skin-applied repellants are effective. In the U.S.A., each product provides this information, as shown on this label.



Please note that most travelers are not approved to donate blood to the general population for at least one year after taking medication for malaria prevention. Please consider donating blood before your trip, as it won't be an option for you after you return. Women who are pregnant, or who may become pregnant within a few months of their return, need to be especially careful with malaria medication. Please be sure your physician is aware of your situation when you discuss malaria medication.

### **Other Health Precautions**

Your risk from other diseases is not great, but it is still wise to take some precautions. Ask your physician about protection against tetanus/diphtheria, polio, and Hepatitis A & B – and any other measures they recommend.

The presence of HIV in Africa does not usually present a problem for travelers, unless for some reason an injection or transfusion is needed. Transfusions of blood are not common, and the major hospitals have a supply of screened plasma. But, if you are particularly concerned, you may want to discuss your options with your physician.

### **EYEGLASSES AND CONTACT LENSES**

If you wear eyeglasses, take an extra pair along on the trip. If you wear contact lenses, you may want to take an extra pair of contacts and a back-up pair of regular glasses. A copy of your eyeglass prescription will make it easy to replace your glasses, if necessary. Contact lens users should bring plenty of any solutions they use. Wearers of soft contact lenses that need daily care should not hesitate to bring them. If the lenses require treatment in an electric sterilizer, however, be sure that you have plug adapters and a voltage transformer that will allow you to use the equipment on 220 volts. Please note that at some locations, electricity provided by solar power or generators may not be available 24 hrs. each day.

### **CPAP MACHINES**

If you use a CPAP machine, please be aware that some lodges and camps may not provide 24 hr electrical service. Portable, battery-operated CPAP machines are currently on the market and you may want to consider purchasing and bringing one with you, if you need your CPAP every night.

## **CHECKLIST: HEALTH**

- ☐ Consult your physician and/or a professional travel clinic no later than eight weeks before your departure.
- ☐ Plan ahead and get the necessary inoculations well before your departure.
- ☐ Ask your medical professional for a recommendation for malaria prevention medication. Let your doctor know if you are or may become pregnant.
- ☐ Let Safari Professionals know of any medical issues you may have and carry a letter from your physician with relevant information.
- ☐ Hand-carry your prescription medicines and bring written copies of all your prescriptions in case you need to replace any while you are on safari.
- ☐ Take some personal medications for infection, headache, upset stomach, allergies, and diarrhea. Get advice and prescriptions from your doctor.
- ☐ Take out additional medical travel insurance if your insurance advisor recommends it after reviewing your own policy and the travel insurance provided.



## **SAFETY**

### **GENERAL RISKS OF TRAVEL**

We make every effort to assure you a safe, healthy, and rewarding journey. Any travel, however, involves some risk. Whether you make your own arrangements or go with a group, the new and wonderful things that travel offers can be a potential source of danger. Although we believe such risks can be greatly minimized and will not pose a serious threat to you, no one is able to guarantee you the same level of safety or health that you might enjoy at home. Standards of health and safety vary widely around the world, and we have little control over local conditions or practices.

### **TRAVEL ADVISORY**

From time to time, the U.S. State Department issues travel advisories regarding travel to and within various countries, as they deem appropriate. You may review their website at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us to discuss them.

## **TRAVELING TO AND FROM YOUR HOME**

### **FLIGHT INFORMATION**

Safari Professionals does not make international flight arrangements. If you would like assistance with your flights, please let us know and we will refer you to a professional air travel agent.

Once you have confirmed your international flight arrangements, please provide us with a copy of your flight confirmation. We need this so we may be sure to have our Safari Professionals team meet you when you arrive in Africa.

If you have given the airline your seating preference, please be aware the airlines do not always follow through with requested seat assignments. Contact the airline directly to insure you obtain the seat you wish.

We recommend you consider arriving at your initial destination a day or two earlier than called for in your itinerary. The most important reason is to prevent a delayed or cancelled flight from causing you to arrive in Africa after the planned start of your safari. Should this happen, we will make arrangements for you to catch up with the group. However, you may incur additional costs if you are unable to start your safari on the day designated in your itinerary. While any additional expenses may be covered by travel insurance, traveling early is the best way to insure this does not happen.

A second reason for our recommendation is that traveling early provides time to relax and recover from the effects of your international flights, especially if your flight arrives in the evening. The schedule on the first day of your safari typically includes an early breakfast and safari briefing before departing between 8 and 9 AM. Many of our travelers arrive a day early so they may rest and begin to adapt to the difference in time zones.

We will be happy to make arrangements for additional accommodations for your early arrival and will confirm the price with you before finalizing them. We can also make arrangements for you to see some of the local attractions, if you wish.

Domestic flights within the United States may be delayed or cancelled, as well. If you have to fly to an



international gateway airport, we suggest you book the earliest flight on the day of your departure or consider flying a day earlier and spending the night at an airport hotel.

## **DEPARTURE**

Please arrive at your airport check-in counter early enough to allow all the necessary check-in and inspection procedures. Most airlines recommend arriving two to three hours before your international flight's departure time. Please check with your airline to confirm their recommendation.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) offers the TSA PreCheck program, which allows travelers to avoid long lines at the airport through an expedited security screening service. The details of the TSA PreCheck program are available here: <https://www.tsa.gov/precheck>.

## **RETURNING HOME**

If you will be flying on to your hometown upon your return, make sure that you allow at least 2 1/2 to 3 hours between your international and domestic flights. Upon returning to the United States, you will have to proceed through immigration, retrieve your baggage and go through customs. If you have nothing to declare, simply go through one of the green lines. If you are flying on to your home, look for an interline check-in counter before leaving the area. You can take your bags to this counter and have them transferred to your next flight. You don't have to carry them with you to another terminal. If you leave the customs hall, you can't get back in; so do this before you leave the area.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection offers an expedited arrival program, Global Entry, that makes returning to the U.S.A. an easier and simpler process, avoiding the long lines occur at Immigration when hundreds of travelers arrive at the same time. The details are available here:

<https://www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry>

We recommend you review the U.S. Customs Service's guidelines before you depart. You will find them at <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go>.

**“All I wanted to do now was get back to Africa.  
We had not left it yet, but when I would wake in the night,  
I would lie, listening, homesick for it already.”  
Ernest Hemingway, “Green Hills of Africa”**

## **Botswana Supplement**

### **Passport:**

**Make sure you have at least five blank pages in your passport for visas, entries and departures. Botswana requires one blank page. Since you will be entering and leaving South Africa twice during your safari, you will need an additional four blank pages.** (South Africa requires two facing blank pages for each set of entry and departure stamps). Blank amendment/ endorsement pages cannot be used for entry and departure stamps. The staff of your international airline has been instructed not to let you board the aircraft if you do not meet the requirements established by the government of South Africa.

### **LUGGAGE AND PACKING:**

Safety rules limit each traveler to a total of **44 lbs. of luggage, including carry-ons**, on light aircraft flights within Southern Africa. It is important to keep your luggage within these guidelines or you may have to pay additional baggage fees. If a flight is full, it is possible that luggage in excess of the limit will not be placed on the aircraft.

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## **Travel VISAS**

**Please note that each country may change its travel visa policies at any time, with little or no notice.**

**Visa Requirements – Botswana:** Citizens of the United States do not need a travel visa to enter Botswana.

**Visa Requirements – South Africa:** Citizens of the United States do not need a travel visa to enter South Africa.

## **Electrical Appliances**

The current in Africa is usually around 220 volts, 50 cycles, so if you have American electrical equipment you want to use, such as a digital camera or a razor, be sure your equipment can be switched to 220 volts, or take along a voltage transformer. Most American equipment operates on 60 cycles, so you may find that appliances with moving parts will operate at less than their normal speed unless they have been modified internally to work at either 50 or 60 cycles. Many electrical appliances now available in the United States operate on dual voltage. If your equipment has that capacity, you will not need a transformer.

Either way, you will need adapters to slip onto your appliance plugs so that they will fit into the electrical sockets in Southern Africa. There are a number of adapters that you may need as you travel throughout Southern Africa. Therefore, you may wish to play it safe and bring a kit of adapters which are available in many luggage stores and other retailers selling travel gear.

These are the electrical connections most often seen in southern Africa:

### **Botswana**



### **South Africa**



We do not recommend bringing an electrical hair dryer or curling iron on safari. Many of the places you will stay use a generator to provide power and the electrical system may be inadequate for the power demands of a hair dryer or curling iron. Most of the hotels, lodges and camps provide hair dryers that are compatible with their electrical system.

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## **Suggested Reading List:**

This list and its descriptions reflect our opinions on some of the best books about Africa, its communities and its wildlife. It is by no means a complete list of our favorites.

Branch, Bill., *Field Guide to the Snakes and Other Reptiles of Southern Africa*, Ralph Curtis Publishing, 1998– For those who love “herps”, this field guide makes it easy to identify snakes and other reptiles through the use of photographs.

Estes, Richard, *The Safari Companion: A Guide to Watching African Mammals*, Chelsea Green Publishing Co., revised 1999 – The best book about African mammal behavior, written specifically for the safari traveler.

Kingdon, Jonathan, *The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals*, A & C Black Publishers Ltd 2003 – Kingdon’s hefty book is simply the top field guide on Africa’s mammals. If you really want to get engaged with African wildlife, get it and bring it along on your safari.

Kingdon, Jonathan, *The Kingdon Pocket Guide to African Mammals*, Princeton University Press, 2005 – Based on the larger field guide, this pocket adaptation is the most comprehensive of the smaller, more easily carried, safari guides about African mammals.

Lanting, Frans, *Okavango: Africa’s Last Eden*, Chronicle Books, 1993 – Frans Lanting brought a new perspective to wildlife photography with this extraordinary celebration of the Okavango, an enormous seasonal wetland in the midst of Botswana’s Kalahari Desert.

Mandela, Nelson, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Back Bay Books, 1995 – After 27 years of imprisonment, Nelson Mandela was released and went on to become the first president of post-apartheid South Africa. His biography is both engrossing and enlightening and a must read for anyone visiting South Africa.

Newman, Kenneth, *Newman’s Birds of Southern Africa*, Struik Publishers, 2002 – Kenneth Newman was a renowned artist and ornithologist who specialized in the birds of southern Africa. It is still our favorite field guide to southern Africa’s incredible birds.

Owens, Mark & Owens, Delia, *Cry of the Kalahari*, Houghton Mifflin, 1984 – This is a remarkable account of a married couple who, without the support of any academic or scientific organization, sold their worldly possessions and went to Botswana to study its wildlife. Their talent for observation and writing made this an international bestseller. *The Eye of the Elephant: An Epic Adventure in the African Wilderness*, their second book, chronicles their efforts to work with local communities to stop the slaughter of elephants.

## **SECTION TWO: ON SAFARI**

You don't have to digest this all at once, but we ask that you read it through carefully at least once before you leave on your safari. Please use this as a reference during your journey. Included are descriptions of situations that you will probably never experience and procedures that you will never need to use, but that are important to know about just the same.

### **VALUABLES**

One of the recurrent problems of travel is losing items or having belongings stolen. Most people simply are not used to a nomadic way of life and don't keep track of their personal possessions very well while on the move. Remember also that travelers are usually quite conspicuous, and thieves thrive on carelessness. Here are some important points to keep in mind wherever you travel:

- ☐ Avoid wearing flashy items like jewelry and fancy clothes in public. It's best to leave your jewelry at home. Most thefts are of the "grab and run" variety.
- ☐ You may be particularly vulnerable while standing in lines, in baggage-claim areas, and in crowded public places where pickpockets lurk.
- ☐ Men should not carry a wallet in pant pockets. Women should carry bags with any flaps held toward them. Hold onto bags tightly in crowded places or leave your purse at home.
- ☐ Do not talk to strangers on the street. Don't listen to any plea for help or any other line that you may be given. Con artists of all sorts abound, so just ignore them and continue on your way. They have very convincing stories and are unbelievably good. If someone persists, go into a shop or other public place, and ask the manager for assistance.
- ☐ Always keep all of your important items in a safe place. It's best to spread valuables in different places rather than in one bag or pocket. It's best to keep your passport on your person at all times. Keep your carry-on bag with you at all times while you are traveling. Don't leave money or credit cards in your hotel room unless there is a safe in the room. Don't leave your purse, day pack or camera bag unattended.

### **LOST LUGGAGE**

It is a sad but true aspect of air travel that bags get delayed or lost. It doesn't happen often, but it does happen, and there is not much that we can do to prevent it. The hopeful note is that the odds of it happening to you are thousands to one. But if it does happen, please don't let it spoil your safari.

Fortunately, delayed bags are more common than lost bags. Our local team will help you purchase whatever you may need. To take advantage of your baggage delay and loss insurance keep your receipts for reimbursement. And your travel insurance company may help locate your luggage if the airlines cannot identify its location. To help your luggage find you, we recommend placing your home address and a copy of your complete itinerary in your luggage to help the airlines get it to you.



## **HEALTH**

### **TRAVEL FATIGUE**

According to an old expression, getting there is half the fun. A lengthy flight, however, can be downright exhausting. The sheer fatigue of air travel, coupled with jet lag, can precondition you for problems when you arrive, unless you take steps to ease its potential effects.

Travel fatigue is primarily caused by lack of sleep. Airplane seats become uncomfortable after a few hours and your feet swell during prolonged sitting. The in-flight routine of safety briefings, passing out of headsets and drinks, meal service, tray collections, miscellaneous announcements, duty-free shopping and movies often seems like a three-ring circus designed to keep you awake. Other factors can also cause fatigue. Many cabins are pressurized at 5,000 ft. or more, which means that those who live at sea level will experience some oxygen deprivation. And the bone-dry air can cause a raw throat and dehydration.

Air travel experts and experienced travelers have techniques for combating travel fatigue. Here are some things you should do to reduce travel fatigue:

- ☐ Get plenty of rest the day before you leave.
- ☐ **HYDRATE!** Avoid alcohol during the flight and drink plenty of other liquids. According to some experts, dehydration is the most debilitating part of air travel. Drinking at least eight ounces of fluid every hour is recommended.
- ☐ Eat lightly during the flight.
- ☐ Exercise. Although the cabin crew may disapprove if you jog around the plane, you can get up and stretch and walk about. There are also simple exercises that will relax your muscles and circulate your blood. Roll your feet, rotate your head, and contract and relax your leg muscles. Do some deep breathing. And if you're not the shy type, raise your knees to your chest and swing your arms over your head. This may result in some quizzical looks from passengers around you, but you'll be better off for it.
- ☐ Stretch out if there are some unoccupied seats. Take off or loosen your shoes.
- ☐ Use earplugs and an eye mask if you wish to sleep during your flight. You may ask your flight attendant to let you rest when they offer meals or other services.

### **JET LAG**

When you travel across time zones, your circadian rhythms (or body clock) are thrown off schedule. For example, East Africa is seven to eight hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. Your watch will tell you it's time to wake up, while your body convincingly argues that it's time to sleep. Coupled with general travel fatigue, jet lag can cause impaired body and mental functions.

Chief among the symptoms are restlessness and fatigue, digestive problems, altered kidney and bowel functioning, pronounced reaction to alcohol, cloudy vision and short-term memory loss.

Several factors can influence the seriousness of jet lag: the number of time zones crossed, the length of the flight, whether there is a stopover during the journey, and the departure and arrival times. In addition, traveling from west to east seems to be more difficult than from east to west. Ideas about how long it takes to adjust vary from "one day for each time zone crossed" to a complicated formula that computes a half dozen interrelated factors.

There are several things you can do to alleviate jet lag. First, follow the suggestions given above to combat general travel fatigue: rest before the flight, exercise, drink plenty of liquids and so on. Second, in preparation for your journey, you can consciously adjust your diet and sleeping patterns prior to your departure to put you more in sync with your destination's time frame.

We suggest you visit The National Sleep Foundation's informative website to learn more about jet lag. <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/jet-lag-and-sleep>.

## **DIGESTIVE DISORDERS**

Stomach and intestinal upsets are common complaints wherever people travel. They range from mild discomfort to diarrhea and vomiting. The vast majority are harmless and quickly pass.

Some digestive upset is probably inevitable for many people. Readjustment of the body clock and exposure to new flora and minerals in the water cause part of it. Overindulgence, a richer than usual diet, and changed eating and drinking habits are responsible for much of it, as well. According to one study, the biggest cause of traveler's stomach upset is overindulgence in rich foods and alcohol, not bacteria in the water supply. Depending on the destination, of course, there may be health hazards from drinking the local water or eating certain foods.

## **FOOD & WATER IN AFRICA**

*"One who never travels thinks it is only his mother who is a good cook." Kikuyu proverb, Kenya*

Good sanitation, fresh foods, and good food preparation techniques keep health problems minimal while on safari in Africa. At the places we stay and eat, there is no need to avoid seafood, dairy products, or other foods. As a precaution, some travelers do avoid raw vegetables and salads.

Only drink bottled or treated drinking water throughout your safari. Bottled or treated water is also served at meals, in your accommodations and is used for making ice cubes. **Do not drink any other water at any time during your safari.**

Always use bottled or treated water for brushing your teeth and rinsing your mouth.

## **TRAVELER'S DIARRHEA**

Traveler's diarrhea is a common malady throughout the world. When it occurs, there are basically two things you can do: stop it with medications or let it run its course. There are several medications that can usually stop it. Some physicians argue, however, that diarrhea is nature's way of ridding the system of harmful toxins and shouldn't be stopped prematurely. You should consult your physician on whether, and under what conditions, you should take diarrhea medicine.

## **AVOID DEHYDRATION**

During your flight be sure to drink plenty of liquids and avoid alcohol. After you arrive, continue to drink lots of liquids. If you aren't careful, you can quickly become dehydrated. You may find you need to drink more non-alcoholic beverages than you do at home.

If you feel you have become dehydrated, sports drink hydration tablets mixed with bottled water may quickly help you feel refreshed. As an example, we never travel without these tablets:

<https://guenergy.com/products/hydration-drink-tabs>.

## RESPIRATORY AILMENTS

Traveling increases the risk of contracting sniffles, throat infections, and other such maladies. There's not much to be done except to take something along for the symptoms.

To shield themselves from dust, some travelers wear a handkerchief or bandanna over their mouth and nose during dusty game drives. Some bring surgical or painters masks to wear during the dusty parts of their safari. Dust, however, may be part of your African safari experience.

For the comfort of others, smoking is not permitted in the safari vehicles or during meals. Many lodges and camps do not allow smoking in their rooms or tents.

## SUN

Don't underestimate the effects of the intense sun. It feels good, but its effects quickly accumulate. Sunburn and sun poisoning can result, and both can cause real discomfort and illness.

**Wear a wide-brimmed hat and use sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 30 whenever you are exposed to the direct rays of the sun.** Remember that the roof of your safari vehicle may be open during game drives. If you tend to place your arm on the vehicle's door as you ride, consider wearing a long-sleeved shirt to prevent sunburn on the exposed arm. You can always roll the sleeves up if you get too warm.

Blue Lizard sunscreen was recommended by our dermatologist. Here is their website:

<https://bluelizardsunscreen.com/>.

## SWIMMING

**Do not swim anywhere other than the pools provided at the lodges where you will be staying.** Swimming pools at hotels and lodges are regarded as safe, although we recommend avoiding ingesting any of the pool water. Never swim in a pond, lake or river.

## MOTION SICKNESS

For travelers prone to motion sickness, various methods of travel may cause significant discomfort. Traveling in the back of a bouncing Land Rover or flying in a small aircraft may trigger motion sickness symptoms.

If you are subject to motion sickness, please review CDC's information about the prevention and treatment of motion sickness at this website: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/motion-sickness>.

Some of our travelers have found relief using pressure bands or devices that mildly stimulates the inside of their wrists. However, their effectiveness has not been proven in clinical studies. Others swear by the use of ginger and some studies have shown that ginger can be effective. We suggest you test any prevention or treatment options before departing on your safari.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

Should you become seriously ill or injured, it may be necessary for you to leave the safari. This may mean hospitalization or taking an early flight home. You may wish to consider purchasing travel insurance to cover any such medical emergencies. Safari Professionals can provide you with a reference to our preferred Travel insurance provider to provide you with a quote for travel insurance, at your request. In East Africa, Safari Professionals provides you with a local evacuation service to Nairobi in the event of a medical emergency. You will receive information regarding this service when you arrive in Africa. In other regions of Africa, your travel insurance will provide initial emergency evacuation services.

Medical emergencies are extremely rare, but rest assured that, in such emergency cases, Safari Professionals and our teams in Africa will provide all the assistance we can to help you obtain the best treatment and appropriate transport back home. Be advised, however, that medical treatment and evacuation may mean that you'll have extra expenses. Please consult with your insurance professional to determine if your health coverage is adequate for your situation.

## **POST-TRAVEL HEALTH**

Some diseases may not manifest themselves immediately. If you become ill after returning home, tell your doctor where you have traveled. Most people who acquire viral, bacterial, or parasitic infections abroad become ill within six weeks after returning home. However, some diseases may not manifest immediately (malaria may not cause symptoms for as long as six months to a year after returning home). Tell your physician where you have traveled within the past 12 months.

## **SAFETY & ACCIDENTS**

The places in Africa we visit are generally safe. As in large cities throughout the world, tourists in any city can be easily spotted by those who may wish to take advantage of them. **Do not leave your guide or group.** If you wish to leave the group, ask your guide to accompany you. Do not stop to talk with strangers. It's also advisable not to wear jewelry in public or display other valuable items that are liable to attract attention. Keep your wallet and passport safe from pickpockets.

While it is true that most accidents occur in the home, where we spend most of our time, traveling away from home can certainly increase your risk of accidents. When traveling, you are in new, unfamiliar territory. And you are often distracted, enthusiastic, or tired enough to make mistakes and forget the little hazards around you.

Take care. And keep these tips in mind:

- ☐ Watch your fingers when the vehicle doors are being closed.
- ☐ Go slowly when entering or leaving a vehicle to avoid bumping your head or losing your footing.
- ☐ Watch your footing when walking on rough ground where there may be rocks or holes. In towns, there may be unmarked open holes in the sidewalks or streets.
- ☐ Brace yourself when the vehicle is going over bumpy roads or through the bush, especially if you are standing; better yet, sit down when going over bumpy roads or when the vehicle is going fast.
- ☐ Watch out for branches in the face when standing in an open roof hatch.
- ☐ Never feed the monkeys, baboons, birds or any wildlife. They're cute, but if you give them food, they'll want more. When they don't get it, they can get frustrated and nasty, and may follow you and possibly bite you in their attempt to get more food.
- ☐ Do not stray from your lodge, camp, or vehicle. Unless it is properly supervised, walking is not permitted in national parks and reserves. If you stop for a picnic or "bush stop," don't walk more than twenty feet from the vehicle or group.
- ☐ Don't approach any wildlife on foot without your guide; stay at least 200 yards from any wild animals you see on foot. Never approach the edge of any body of water without a guide.
- ☐ Take special care when crossing the street in the cities – following the British tradition, the

direction of traffic is reversed!

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Land line telephones are notoriously unreliable in most of Africa. Exceptions may be found at the larger hotels but expect prices to be very high. If regular communication is important to you, mobile phones are effective in many of our safari destinations. Your current mobile phone service provider may be able to help you evaluate your options. However, mobile phone service may not be available or may be unreliable at the destinations you visit. In addition, please note that text service and email may not be available on your mobile phone in some locations.

An increasing number of lodges and camps offer Wi-Fi service, usually via satellite. We will do our best to inform you what may be available but please keep in mind that Wi-Fi may not be available at the time of your visit and, when available, bandwidth may be very limited.

Some of our travelers rent satellite phones, which may make it easier to communicate with family, friends and associates.

You will be given contact information prior to your departure that we suggest you share with your family and friends. It will contain the various direct phone numbers they may use if they need to contact you while you are on safari. If they need to contact you, we recommend they first call the direct numbers in Africa. Even with the latest technology, it can take several hours for messages to be transmitted through Safari Professionals while you are on safari.

## **SHOPPING**

Lodges and camps generally have small gift shops. As with shops in the cities, their prices are fixed. Our travelers have found them to be generally reliable for shipping their purchases to the U.S.

In small “curio” shops or markets, bargaining is the order of the day. We do not recommend asking these merchants to ship your purchases.

If you can, pack the items you buy in your check-in luggage, or hand carry them home with you. (You will not be able to carry a spear or knife with you on the aircraft, so pack this in your checked luggage.) If there is something you want that you cannot take with you on the plane, you may be able to have a shopkeeper or a delivery service ship it home for you. It may take some time for your shipment to arrive in the U.S., and you may have to go to a customs office to claim it.

## **SAFARI ETHICS & ETIQUETTE**

Adhering to the following guidelines will help everyone enjoy their safari to the fullest.

- ☐ Do not encourage your guide to stray from the roads in locations where it is not permitted.
- ☐ Do not ask your guide to approach any wildlife so close that it may be frightened or harassed. Guides must follow certain rules and regulations that are designed to protect the environment, wildlife and travelers. Stiff penalties are imposed on guides who break the rules. If you wish to get



closer to an animal, ask your guide, but accept their decision if that you are close enough.

- ☐ Do not crowd animals. If you see that several vehicles are near an animal already, your guide may suggest waiting or moving to another location.
- ☐ Do not disturb animals in any way. Please do not make loud sounds or throw anything to attract an animal's attention.
- ☐ Do not hang out of vehicle windows or sit on top of the roof of the vehicle. Do not get out of a vehicle within 200 yards of any game animal.
- ☐ Do not discard litter of any kind. Besides being unsightly, litter can choke or poison animals, including birds.
- ☐ Do not pick, cut, or destroy any vegetation or remove any object from the parks and reserves, particularly bones, feathers, or other animal trophies.
- ☐ Avoid abrupt movements or loud talking that can startle or scare away wildlife.
- ☐ Never feed animals, including birds.
- ☐ Watch to see that everyone has finished taking their photos before making any movements in your vehicle. Even the slightest movement can cause a photo to be out of focus.
- ☐ Smoking is not permitted in vehicles or at meals on this safari.
- ☐ Many Africans consider having their picture taken without their approval to be highly offensive. **Please do not take any photographs of people, including from within your vehicle, without obtaining the subject's necessary permission first.**
- ☐ Conserve water whenever possible. It is one of Africa's most precious resources.

## **MISCELLANEOUS SAFARI ADVICE**

Every effort has been made to ensure your comfort and well-being, but there will be times when you may experience discomfort and annoyance. You can expect bumpy roads and a certain amount of dust. Small discomforts can become magnified when traveling, especially after a couple of long flights. Please remember that patience and a sense of humor often serve as the most effective responses.

We, at Safari Professionals, pride ourselves on a quiet and gentle approach to wildlife viewing. For example, rather than spending a few minutes simply photographing a resting, but alert, cheetah, and moving on, we often stop to observe this unique cat for an extended period. We have seen other vehicles arrive and quickly leave after a few photos are taken. Our patience has often been rewarded, giving our travelers some rare and rewarding experiences. By patiently sitting quietly, you will also be able to take in other sights, sounds, and smells that will add to your lasting memories of Africa.

The pace of your safari is not rushed, but the days may be full and active. Please remember that game drives, nature walks, and other activities are all optional. Do not feel obliged to go along with the group on a particular game drive if you would rather stay and just enjoy the view. In short, adjust your own pace. If you get tired, please slow down.

Take advantage of the quiet time between game drives. Many of our travelers keep a journal of their adventures. It is also a good time to simply observe the world around you. You may not have noticed the

variety of colorful birds or the scampering of small mammals around you. Catch up on that reading you've been looking forward to. Bring a sketch book and capture your own personal vision of the sights around you. When appropriate, spend a few minutes listening to a member of the camp staff tell you about his or her family. Take this quiet time back with you as part of your memories of your African safari adventure!

### **SUGGESTED READING:**

You will receive additional information about books you may find interesting as you prepare for your safari adventures.

**“There is something about safari life  
that makes you forget all your sorrows and  
feel as if you had drunk half a bottle of champagne –  
bubbling all over with heartfelt gratitude for being alive”  
KAREN BLIXEN**

