

SAFARI GUIDEBOOK

LUXURY CONSERVATION BOTSWANA SAFARI



PREPARED FOR THE
AZA EXPLORATORY SAFARI

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Be prepared for your safari adventure to Botswana with this personal guidebook.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF OF EXPLORATION

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

PREFACE

This Safari Guide contains all the information you will need before going on your safari. It is divided into two sections: **Section One: Before Departure** contains important information that you will need before you leave. Please read it now for this reason. **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.**



BOTSWANA FACTS

About Botswana

Situated in the heart of southern Africa, Botswana is a land-locked country, bordered by Zambia and Zimbabwe to the northeast, Namibia to the north and west, and South Africa to the south and east. At Kazungula, four countries - Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia - meet at a single point mid-stream in the Zambezi River.

Botswana is widely regarded as having some of the best wilderness and wildlife areas on the African continent. Experience the stunning beauty of the world's largest intact inland delta - the Okavango, the ancient riverbeds of the world's second largest game reserve - the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, the vast sea of whiteness that is the Makgadikgadi and the prolific wildlife of the Chobe National Park. Most of the country is flat and 84% of the country is covered by the Kalahari Desert.

Time Zone

Botswana operates on GMT +2 hours standard time, which means it is seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Languages

English is the official language, while Setswana (or Tswana) which is spoken by 90% of the population is the national language. There are several different tribes who speak their own language, the oldest being the San.

Seasons & Climate

Spring: *September – October* - The weather is changing, and winter is all but gone. With the oncoming threat of rain, the air becomes hot and October daytime temperatures head above 100°F with nighttime temperatures averaging the high 60's°F.

Summer or 'Green Season': *November - March* - Temperatures may be very high however summer is also the rainy season, and cloud coverage and rain can cool things down considerably, although only usually for a short period of time. January and February are generally the wettest months with spectacular afternoon thunderstorms and dramatic skies.

Autumn: *April - May* - There is little rainfall and although the days are still warm the nights are distinctly cooler. This is a lovely time of year.

Winter: *June - August* - Clear cobalt blue skies and bone-dry, the air is seductively warm during the daylight hours but, because there is no cloud cover, cold at night and in the early mornings. Sometimes bitterly so - frost is common and small quantities of water can freeze.

SECTION 1

BEFORE DEPARTURE



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 your safari. If it doesn't, please get a new passport now. We suggest that you have at least two blank pages in your passport.



Talk to a Medical Professional/Travel Health Clinic

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.



Book International Flights To/From Home

Safari Professionals does not make international flight arrangements.



Send Us a Copy of Your International Air Confirmations *(as soon as you receive them)*

We need to provide your flights details to our team in Botswana to coordinate all your arrangements. Send to support@safariprofessionals.com

PASSPORT

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

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 home, you will need to renew it. Renewal requires an 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

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 five 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 five 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

PASSPORT

(Continued)

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 Botswana.**

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

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.

WHAT TO BRING



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.** Always keep these items with you in your carry-on luggage. **And don't forget your passport!**

Important: Anyone travelling with children under 18 years will need to present an **unabridged birth certificate** at port of entry.



Luggage

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.

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

Inter camp transfers are by light aircraft and the charter companies are extremely strict when it comes to imposing the luggage allowance of 44 lbs. of luggage, including carry-ons. 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 more than the limit will not be placed on the aircraft.

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. Please check with all your international airlines now to determine if your carry-on luggage meets their specific requirements.

We strongly recommend you consider securing your checked baggage with locks approved by the U.S. Transportation Safety Administration (TSA). Additional details are available at this TSA website: <http://www.tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips>.

We recommend you place tracking device, such as an Apple AirTag, in your checked luggage so you can track the location if the baggage is misplaced.

WHAT TO BRING

(Continued)



Clothing

Once again, travel light. Casual wash-and-wear weather appropriate clothing is recommended for your safari. It is advised to plan to dress in layers in preparation for changing temperatures from early mornings to midafternoon. Brief showers can occur anytime, even when traveling in the “dry” seasons.

Remember, although you are traveling to Botswana, some of the locations you may visit may be cool in the morning and evenings when the sun is down.

During the day, wear pants, jeans, shorts, or a lightweight skirt, and lightweight, comfortable, and moisture-wicking top, preferably khaki, tan, or another neutral color, so as not to startle those animals and birds which have color vision. Bring a sweater, 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.

Laundry service is available at most locations. 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.

WHAT TO BRING

(Continued)

Clothing (continued)

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:

BASS PRO SHOPS: <https://www.basspro.com>

COLUMBIA: <https://www.columbia.com>

KUIU: <https://www.kuiu.com>

PATAGONIA: <https://www.patagonia.com>

TILLEY: <http://www.tilley.com>

ORVIS: <http://www.orvis.com>

MAGELLANS: <http://www.magellans.com>

SUN PRECAUTIONS: <http://www.sunprecautions.com>

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 vehicles and walks, or you will find yourself collecting a lot of sand, dirt or a needle-sharp acacia thorn.



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.

WHAT TO BRING

(Continued)



Camera

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 70 and 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.

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 ensure it functions 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 you won't miss a great photo opportunity. You will likely not be able to purchase another battery while on safari.



WHAT TO BRING

(Continued)



Electrical Appliances

You will need adapters to slip onto your appliance plugs so that they will fit into the electrical sockets in Botswana. If you travel to more than one country, you may need additional adapters. Therefore, you can play it safe and bring a kit of adapters or a single adapter with several plug options. These adapters are available online and in many sporting goods stores, luggage stores and other retailers selling travel gear.

For more information about power systems around the world, please visit this website:

<https://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/>.

These are the electrical connections most often seen in Botswana and South Africa:



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.

WHAT TO BRING

(Continued)



Bring a Buff

In the dry season, there will be a lot of dust in the air. If dust bothers you, we suggest you bring a bandanna or buff to wear over your mouth and nose.



Bring Binoculars

Everyone who goes on a wildlife safari should have his or her own pair of binoculars. If you don't already have some, purchasing a good pair of binoculars is a wise investment. Binoculars are an essential tool for seeing birds and smaller animals and watching animals' behaviors at a distance. 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.



Bring Support for Rough Terrain

Roads in Africa can be quite bumpy, and game viewing often takes you over rough terrain. We recommend women consider wearing a sports bra or other strong support for comfort during the drives.



Bring a Rain Jacket

Although we are usually travelling during the dry season, rainstorms can occur at any time. The lodges generally provide umbrellas if they are needed.



CHECKLIST - CLOTHING

Clothing

Lightweight, comfortable, and moisture-wicking blend clothing in neutral colors (avoid dark blue clothing which may attract insects during daylight hours)

3 or 4 short or long sleeve shirts – based on personal preference 1 or 2 long sleeved shirts (most travelers find a total of 3 or 4 shirts to be sufficient)

3 or 4 pairs of pants and/or shorts and skirts

Belt

Sleepwear

Windbreaker/sweater/sweatshirt/fleece (early morning game drives can be chilly!)

3 or 4 pairs of 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

Carry-On or On Your Person

Passport, airline confirmations

Credit card, cash (due to security concerns, do not use debit cards in Africa)

Medications (do not pack medications in checked luggage)

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

CHECKLIST - MISCELLANEOUS

Miscellaneous Items

- Portable external battery to charge your phone
- Charging cables
- Toiletries
- Insect repellent
- Small flashlight
- 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)
- Buff or bandanna / eye drops for dust irritation
- Small notebook or journal and pens
- Sewing kit, rubber bands, duct tape
- 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)

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 and larger “curio” shops accept MasterCard and Visa. Be sure to ask if they accept the cards. Some shops may add the processing fee the credit card company charges to your total. 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.

When travelling anywhere, always keep your money and valuables with you. Never leave them in your room or leave them unattended in vehicles.

Tipping

Tips can be a significant portion of income for safari guides and 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 to an international destination, we recommend you consult your physician and a professional travel clinic. **Make the doctor's appointment at least 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. You should get a physical examination if you haven't had one recently. Discuss your itinerary and describe your planned activities with your doctor if you have any questions about your fitness.

Let us know if you have any medical conditions requiring special care or medications.

In addition to getting specific inoculations and drugs, it is also a good idea to bring along some general medicines. 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.

If you have any special condition or allergy that might 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 need medical care away from home, your temporary physician can treat you more efficiently and effectively.

If you have severe allergies that require an Epi-pen, please be sure to bring them.

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 ensure you are adequately covered while travelling overseas.

HEALTH

(Continued)

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 their physician for specific advice.

You will be travelling 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 services are available in Africa, it is sometimes impossible 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.

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. You'll find the CDC's recommendations here: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm>.

Please consult your safari landing page for our recommended online health travel professionals.

Eyeglasses & Contact Lenses

If you wear eyeglasses, take an extra pair along on the trip. If you wear contact lenses, you should take an extra pair of contacts and a backup pair of regular glasses. A copy of your eyeglass prescription will make it easy to replace your glasses if necessary.

CPAP Machine

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

If you can only bring a CPAP that requires overnight electricity, please contact us at inquiry@safariprofessionals.com to confirm that the lodges and camps on your itinerary can accommodate that.

HEALTH

(Continued)

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 the 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 a delay in 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: Many drugs are available for the prevention of malaria. The drug currently 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 the CDC's detailed recommendations for African countries, 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 body parts 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 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.

CHECKLIST - HEALTH

Health

Consult your physician and/or a professional travel clinic 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.

Carry your prescription medicines by hand and bring written copies of all your prescriptions if you need to replace any while 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 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 dangerous. Although such risks can be greatly minimized and will not pose a serious threat to you, no one can guarantee you the same level of safety or health that you might enjoy at home. Health and safety standards vary widely worldwide, 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, don't hesitate to get in touch with us to discuss them.

TRAVELLING TO/FROM HOME

Flight Information

Safari Professionals does not make international flight arrangements. If you would like to work with a professional air travel agent, please contact Cathy King of King Travel at adventuretrips@hotmail.com or call her at 828-421-5000.

Once you have confirmed your international flight arrangements, please provide us with a copy of your flight confirmation by send it to support@safariprofessionals.com. We need this so our Safari Professionals team can meet you when you arrive in Africa.

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 arrange for you to catch up with the group. However, you may incur additional costs if you cannot start your safari on the day designated in your itinerary. While travel insurance may cover additional expenses, travelling early is the best way to ensure this does not happen.

We will happily arrange additional accommodations for your early arrival and confirm the price before finalizing them. We can also arrange for you to see some of the local attractions if you wish.

Domestic flights within the United States may also be delayed or cancelled. 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.

Flying Departure Times

Minimum check-in time for domestic flights is 2 hours; regional and international flights is 3 hours. This applies in North America and Africa.

TRAVELLING TO/FROM HOME

Returning Home

If you will be flying to your hometown upon your return, allow at least 2 1/2 to 3 hours between your international and domestic flights. Upon returning to the United States, you must proceed through immigration, retrieve your baggage and go through customs. If you have nothing to declare, go through one of the green lines.

If you are flying to your home, look for an interline check-in counter before leaving the area. You can take your bags to this counter and transfer them 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 that occur at Immigration when hundreds of travelers arrive simultaneously. 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> .

SUGGESTED READING

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.

- Owens, Mark & Owens, Delia, **Cry of the Kalahari**, Houghton Mifflin, 1984
- Allison, Peter, **Don't Run, Whatever You Do: My Adventures as a Safari Guide**, Lyons Press, 2023
- Keene-Young, Robyn & Bailey, Adrian, **Okavango: Jewel of the Kalahari**, Penguin, 2010
- Emmett, Megan & Patrick, Sean, **Game Ranger in Your Backpack**, Briza Publications, 2011
- Carnaby, Trevor, **Beat About the Bush**, Jacana Media, 2013

SECTION 2

ON SAFARI



VALUABLES

Valuable Tips

One of the recurrent travel problems is losing items or having belongings stolen. Most people are not used to a nomadic way of life and don't keep track of their possessions very well while on the move.

Remember that travelers are usually 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. You may be particularly vulnerable while standing in lines, baggage-claim areas, and crowded
- public places where pickpockets lurk. Men should not carry a wallet in their 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 you may be given. Con artists of all sorts abound, so ignore them and continue on your way.
- They have very convincing stories and are unbelievably good. If someone persists, ask the manager for assistance in a shop or other public place. **Always keep all your important items in a safe place.** Spreading valuables in different places rather than in one bag or pocket is best. It's best to keep your passport on your person at all times. **Always keep your carry-on bag with you while you are**
- **travelling.** Don't leave money or credit cards in your hotel room unless there is a safe. Don't leave your purse, day pack or camera bag unattended.
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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. **Keep your receipts for reimbursement** to take advantage of your baggage delay and loss insurance. Your travel insurance company may help locate your luggage if the airlines need help identifying its location. To help your luggage find you, we recommend **placing your home address and a tracking device, like an Apple Airtag**, to help the airlines get it to you.

HEALTH

Travel Fatigue

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.**
- **Eat lightly during the flight.**
- Exercise. You can **get up and stretch and walk about while on the plane.** Roll your feet, rotate your head, and contract and relax your leg muscles.
- **Stretch out** if there are some unoccupied seats. Take off or loosen your shoes.
- **Use earplugs and an eye mask to sleep during your flight.** You may ask your flight attendant to let you rest when they offer meals or other services.

Jet Lag

There are several things you can do to alleviate jet lag.

First, follow the suggestions given above to combat general travel fatigue.

Second, in preparation for your journey, you can consciously adjust your diet and sleeping patterns before 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.](http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/jet-lag-and-sleep)

HEALTH

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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 inevitable for many people. Readjustment of the body clock and exposure to new flora and minerals in the water cause part of it.

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, there may be health hazards from drinking the local water or eating certain foods.

Food & Water in Africa

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 two things you can do: stop it with medications or let it run its course. Several medications 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.

HEALTH

(Continued)

Avoid Dehydration

During your flight, 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.

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

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

Respiratory Ailments

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

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. 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/>.

HEALTH

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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 considered safe, although we recommend avoiding ingesting any 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. Travelling 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>.

Emergency Medical Care

Should you become seriously ill or injured, you may need to leave the safari. This may mean hospitalization or taking an early flight home. You may 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.

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 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 travelled. 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 six months to a year after returning home). Tell your physician where you have travelled within the past 12 months.

SAFETY & ACCIDENTS

Keep in Mind

The places in Africa we visit are generally safe. As in large cities worldwide, 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.

While it is true that most accidents occur in the home, where we spend most of our time, travelling away from home can certainly increase your risk of accidents. When travelling, you are in new, unfamiliar territory. 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. There may be unmarked open holes in the sidewalks or streets in towns.
- 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.
- Never feed the monkeys, baboons, birds, or any wildlife. They're cute, but they'll want more if you give them food. When they don't get it, they can get frustrated and nasty and may follow you and bite you to get more food.
- Do not stray from your lodge, camp, or vehicle. Walking is prohibited in national parks and reserves unless it is properly supervised. 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

Mobile Devices

If regular communication is important to you, mobile phones are effective in many of our safari destinations. Your current mobile phone service provider can 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.

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

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

Emergency Contacts

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

RECOMMENDED: The best method of communication with emergency contacts while on safari, as well as those back home that we have found, is the messaging app **WhatsApp**. That's often the quickest way to get emergency assistance, but also the most reliable in non-emergency situations as it works over Wi-Fi, which is widely available.

SHOPPING

Lodges and camps generally have small gift shops. As with shops in the cities, their prices are fixed. Our travelers have found them 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 cannot 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 can have a shopkeeper or a delivery service ship it home for you. Your shipment may take some time 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.
- Please 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 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 you are close enough.
- Do not crowd animals. If you see several vehicles 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 vehicle's roof. 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 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 photograph 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 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 travelling, 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 taking a few photos. Our patience has often been rewarded, giving our travelers rare and rewarding experiences. By patiently sitting quietly, you can also 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 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 sketchbook 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!