



GENERAL INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Insurance:

It is a condition of booking that the sole responsibility lies with the guest to ensure that they carry the correct comprehensive travel and medical insurance to cover themselves, as well as any dependants /traveling companions for the duration of their trip to East and southern Africa. This insurance should include cover in respect of at least the following eventualities; cancellation or curtailment of the safari, emergency evacuation expenses, medical expenses, repatriation expenses, damage/theft/loss of personal luggage, money and goods. Apex Photo Safaris, including their representatives, employees and agents can take no responsibility for any costs and losses incurred or suffered by the guest, guest's dependants or traveling companions, with regards to any of the above mentioned eventualities. Guests will be charged directly by the relevant service providers for any emergency services they may require, and may find themselves in a position unable to access such services should they not be carrying the relevant insurance cover.

Passports, Visas, and Immigration:

International visitors require a valid passport together with onward travel documents. When traveling to East & Southern Africa guests must please ensure that their passport is valid for at least 6 months after their scheduled departure date and that they have a minimum of 2 blank pages in their passport to enable the entry visa to be issued (if there is insufficient space in the passport then entry may be denied). In addition, if a father (or mother) is traveling alone with his (her) children (aged 18 years or younger) then a letter of consent, certified by their local police, should be signed by the other parent and carried with them.

All passport holders should verify with their travel agent or relevant consulate concerning visa entry requirements specific to the nationality of their passport (a maximum of 90 days is granted for a tourist visa). If you are extending your journey to other countries, please establish entry requirements for those countries as well. If returning to Namibia, Botswana or Zambia after visiting other countries you will need a multiple entry visa.

Please ensure that you have arranged the entire necessary single or multiple entry visas prior to your arrival into East & Southern Africa (unless you have confirmed they are available on entry).

It is imperative to check your visa requirements with the relevant embassies/consulates as it may vary according to your nationality. Where visas can be obtained at a port of entry, these are payable in US Dollars, cash in most destinations; we recommend small denominations as officials are not in the position to give change.

We highly recommend obtaining your visas from the relevant embassies/consulates of the countries you are planning to visit prior to your departure. This can save time due to long lines at the immigration counters/desks.



Tourism Development Levies For Botswana

Please note that effective from 1st June 2017, all travellers to Botswana with the exception of residents and citizens of Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states will have to pay a tourism development levy on arrival, USD 30 per person. Although it is advised that payment is possible by means of credit and debit cards at port of entries, it is recommended to carry this in cash.

New Regulations for families travelling to Southern Africa with children

Botswana's ministry of nationality, immigration and gender affairs has imposed requirements, with immediate effect, for minors (children under 18) travelling through the country's ports of entry. Parents travelling with minors will be required to produce certified copies of their child's unabridged birth certificate, in addition to their valid passports. In the event that one parent is not travelling with the child, the parents' affidavit, consenting to such travel, will be required. However, an affidavit will not be required if the father's name does not appear on the child's birth certificate.

Similarly to South Africa, the new regulations on family travel in Botswana have been implemented as a response to concerns associated with global child trafficking.

Flight check-in times:

Please check in early at all airports (at least one hour for domestic flights, two hours for regional flights and three hours for international flights) as the flights are occasionally overbooked. Please be aware that during peak season delays are often encountered on scheduled flights. Remember that you are on holiday...Relax and enjoy the ambience, which sometimes has no sense of urgency at all!

In the event of bad weather, airlines reserve the right to drop guests off at the nearest serviceable airstrip, which may mean a road transfer for guests to get to their final destination. Any costs resulting from such diversions would be for your own account.

Some shuttle inter-lodge flights may depart early in the morning, which means you will miss your morning activity. Regrettably, this is beyond our control as flights are scheduled to meet onward and connecting flights out of the various international airports. If a specific departure time is required, a private charter will need to be booked.

In Botswana, Mack Air would need an advance warning for any guests exceeding 110kgs. This information would need to be communicated at the time of booking. If Mack Air has not been advised prior to the flight and an additional aircraft needs to be dispatched, this cost will be passed on to the guests.



Luggage restrictions:

Where possible all luggages should be packed into soft, collapsible bags that can easily fit into vehicles and light aircraft. We suggest one item of hand luggage per person that can travel with you in the vehicle/light aircraft (including camera gear).

When traveling on a private guided safari with us we do not have a set luggage limit but recommend the use of soft bags, ideally one or two per person plus hand luggage. When traveling on a scheduled group safari we do request a luggage limit of 15-20 kgs per person in a soft bag, plus hand luggage.

Most importantly, if your safari itinerary includes any seat rate flights by light aircraft you must adhere to the strict luggage limit of 15-20 kgs per person within Namibia or 12 kgs per person within Botswana and Zambia (unless otherwise stated), in soft bags only and including hand luggage. For those traveling by private charter flights whilst on safari you will be advised of the luggage restrictions based on your group size and the light aircraft used.

If you have any excess luggage you are welcome to store this for safekeeping at our office until you return or link up again with your guide and vehicle.

The weight restrictions in each region is as follows:

1. Botswana and Namibia: MAX of 20Kgs (44lbs) which includes hand luggage
2. Kenya and Tanzania: MAX of 15Kgs (33lbs) which includes hand luggage

When travelling to any of our destinations in Africa, please remember that it is a criminal offence to be in possession of, to deal with or to traffic in wildlife products. This includes, without limitation, ivory, rhino horns, furs, claws, teeth, bones, eggs, meat and feathers of any form of wildlife. The penalties for violating legislation governing the possession and trafficking of wildlife products in Africa among the most punitive in the world and may even lead to life imprisonment upon successful prosecution.

Lost luggage:

Luggage that goes missing on scheduled flights is beyond the control of Apex Photo Safaris and often the airline concerned. The airport controls what happens to passengers' luggage from when it is checked in until it is put on board the flight.

We suggest that you take the following precautionary action; please pack a small bag with your essentials, including any life sustaining medication, which can be carried with you as hand luggage, and pack a second bag containing non-essentials that can be loaded in the aircraft hold. If the second bag does not arrive immediately, you will still have your essential items on hand to see you through the first couple of days while we try to recover your bag.

In the event of any luggage getting lost, please ensure you provide the airline representative with your location over the following week so they know where to forward the luggage to. You should also request a lost luggage reference number so that your luggage can be traced (and also advise Apex Photo Safaris of this reference number), and finally we recommend you provide the airline representative with the contact details of Apex Photo Safaris so that we can monitor this for you and ensure your luggage is delivered to the correct destination should they be unable to reach you whilst you are on safari.



Meals and dietary requirements:

Please ensure that you inform Apex Photo Safaris in advance of any dietary requirements, preferences or food allergies that you have and we will pass this information on to the accommodation establishments so that they may cater for you accordingly. Whilst on a guided safari most breakfasts and evening meals will be taken at the lodge you are staying at or in our fully serviced mobile camps. Lunches whilst traveling between destinations will be served picnic style at a scenic location en route, or at a café or restaurant should there not be a suitable picnic site.

Beverages:

Beverages whilst on safari are to be settled directly by guests with the exception of lodges where local beverages are included in your stay, of water and juice in the vehicle and with picnic lunches whilst on guided safaris, or if otherwise specified. All vehicles are equipped with a fridge or cool box stocked with bottled water for your convenience. Tea and coffee are offered by most accommodation establishments free of charge with meals and in the afternoon, just before the safari activities.

Health:

There are a few basic health matters that require care and attention. We are not medical practitioners and the following points are recommended guidelines only. Please consult your doctor and also check with your health department prior to departure for any changes in health regulations.

Yellow Fever certificates are needed when entering East and Southern Africa especially if you come from or have recently visited high-risk countries, especially certain parts of Africa (East, West and Central). Bilharzia still occurs in parts of Namibia, HIV infection is on the increase and TB is widespread in the few more densely populated areas. Recommended (but not compulsory) vaccinations are Tetanus and Infectious Hepatitis.

Malaria

Malaria within East & Southern Africa is prevalent in some but not all areas. It is encountered mainly in wetter areas, as mosquitoes require calm waters to breed. It can be found throughout Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and much of Botswana. Northern Namibia is also a malaria area. Should you be visiting these areas malaria precautions are advised.

Malaria transmission is at its highest during the warmer and wetter months of November through to April. From May to October the risks of contracting malaria are reduced. Malaria is transmitted by a very small percentage of female *Anopheles* mosquitoes. They are generally only active in the early evening and throughout the night, at the times when one is usually sleeping or sitting around the campfire. The malaria parasite requires a human host in order to complete its life cycle. In most cases, camps and lodges are situated in remote, unpopulated areas, so the chances of contracting malaria are very slim. Nonetheless, we believe it is worth taking preventative measures. Both chloroquine-resistant and normal strains of malaria are prevalent in Africa.

Malaria prophylactic recommendations for southern Africa travelers

Expert opinion differs regarding the best approach to malaria prophylaxis. It is important to bear in mind that malaria may be contracted despite chemoprophylaxis, especially in areas



where chloroquine resistance has been reported. Please remember that the best insurance is the preventative kind; avoid being bitten by using mosquito repellents liberally; wear long-sleeved shirts and trousers/slacks in the evenings; if staying in a bungalow or tent, spray with an insecticide like DOOM to kill any mosquitoes that may have flown into your room. If you become ill on your return, while still on prophylaxis or even once you have stopped taking them, ensure that you tell your doctor you have been in a malarial area and that they do everything to establish that your illness is not malaria. Malaria is not a serious problem if you are sensible and take basic precautions. There have been no cases of our guests contracting malaria in over 15 years of operation.

Water

It is very important that you drink plenty of water, especially during the warmer months. It is generally recommended that guests drink at least 2 to 3 litres of water per day to limit effects of dehydration. This excludes tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages, which act as diuretics and can actually contribute to dehydration. Generally, water throughout Southern Africa is safe to drink directly from the tap, with exception of locations beside perennial rivers where the tap water may be pumped from the river, as in parts of the Caprivi Strip. However, bottled water is readily available, so please ask your guide or lodge staff if you are unsure and do not allow yourself to become dehydrated. Besides keeping yourself hydrated, please note that water is a scarce commodity in southern Africa, and every effort should be made to save where possible!

In East Africa, it is highly recommended not to drink tap water. Please consume bottled water only!

Ticks can be found in Africa's wilderness areas. To avoid getting bitten when going for bush walks, guests are advised to take precautions by wearing long trousers, socks and boots. Please note that there is a possibility that tick bites could lead to tick bite fever. Symptoms include fever, headaches and painful, enlarged lymph glands in the area of the bite. If you experience these symptoms after returning home, please visit your doctor and advise them of the possibility of tick bite fever.

Currency and credit cards:

Both Namibian dollars and South African Rand are equal in value and are accepted as legal tender anywhere in Namibia (other currencies such as US\$ are not so). When departing Namibia we recommend that any cash you take with you is in South African Rand as Namibian dollars are generally not easily exchanged outside of Namibia.

In Botswana, the currency is Pula, but US Dollars cash is widely accepted.

In Zimbabwe, we recommend small denominations of USD cash. Credit cards are accepted just about everywhere. Foreign nationals are able to withdraw cash from ATM's with a foreign bank card, although it is limited to \$200 per day.

In Zambia, the currency is US Dollars.

In Kenya, the currency is Kenya Shillings (KSHS) and in Tanzania, the currency is Tanzanian Shillings (TSHS). US Dollars cash is widely accepted and so is Great Britain Pound (GBP) and Euros. Credit and debit cards are widely accepted.

Visa and Master Card are usually accepted throughout East & Southern Africa, but American Express and Diners Club are not as widely accepted.



Travelers cheques can be exchanged at most bureaux de change and banks (with passport identification). Suppliers of services are less likely to accept Travelers cheques.

Most foreign hard currencies (US\$, £, €, ZAR and CHF are the most commonly accepted) can be exchanged at bureaux de change and banks.

Fuel stations only accept cash payment and not credit card payments.

Business Hours:

There are no uniform times for opening and closing, and hours may vary from business to business and town to town. Please note that the below guidelines may vary and that most businesses are closed on Sundays.

Banks

Weekdays: 09h00 - 15h30
Saturdays: 09h00 - 11h00
Sundays & public holidays: Closed

Shops

Weekdays: 08h30 - 17h00
Saturdays: 09h00 - 13h00
Sundays & public holidays: 09h00 - 13h00

Supermarkets

Weekdays: 08h30 - 19h00
Saturdays: 08h30 - 19h00
Sundays & public holidays: 09h00 - 18h00

Restaurants

Lunch: 12h00 - 14h00
Dinner: 18h00 - 22h00
Many restaurants close one day a week, usually a Sunday or a Monday.
Most kitchens close at 22h00 and guests should place orders by 21h30.

Electrical:

Electrical outlets in East & Southern Africa are 220 volt, 15 amps and have three round/rectangular pins (the same as the old UK style plugs). Adaptors can usually be purchased in Nairobi or Johannesburg when you arrive or at Heathrow/Gatwick/Johannesburg airports. It is possible to recharge batteries at most lodges, tented camps, and guesthouses, and you are welcome to bring an adaptor to recharge batteries using the vehicle's cigarette lighter socket.

Language:

English is widely spoken throughout East & Southern Africa.



Climate:

NAMIBIA:

The cold Benguela current keeps the coast of the Namib Desert cool, damp and free of rain for most of the year, with a thick coastal fog. Inland, all the rain falls in summer (November to April). January and February are the hottest months, when daytime temperatures in the interior can exceed 40°C (104°F), but nights are usually cool. Winter nights can be very cold, but days are generally warm and pleasant.

BOTSWANA:

Botswana's climate is mainly temperate. Summer, October to April, can be very hot, but daytime temperatures typically average around 30°C (86°F). The rainy season lasts from January to March. Winter, May to September, brings cooler weather with an average temperature of 25°C (77°F); early mornings and evenings may be very cold.

ZIMBABWE:

Although located in the tropics, temperature conditions prevail all year as the climate is moderated by altitude and the inland position of the country. The hot and dry season is from August to October, and the rainy season from November to March. Nighttime temperatures can become very cold during the winter months.

KENYA:

Kenya's climate is mainly temperate. Summer, July to October, can be very hot, but daytime temperatures typically average around 30°C (86°F). The rainy season lasts from March to May (long rains), and November to December (short rains) brings cooler weather with an average temperature of 25°C (77°F); early mornings and evenings may be very cold.

TANZANIA:

Tanzania's climate, like Kenya is mainly temperate. Summer, June to October, can be very hot, but daytime temperatures typically average around 30°C (86°F). The rainy season lasts from March to May (long rains), and November to December (short rains) brings cooler weather with an average temperature of 25°C (77°F); early mornings and evenings may be very cold.



Telecommunications:

To dial out from southern Africa for an international call use 00 followed by the relevant international number. To dial into Namibia you need + 264, for South Africa + 27, for Botswana + 267 and Zambia + 260. Cellular phones are on the GSM system and mobile coverage is available within major towns.

To dial out from East Africa for an international call use your relevant international dialing code followed by the phone number. To Dial into Kenya you need +254 and for Tanzania +255. Mobile coverage is available within major towns and major parks & reserves.

Traveling companions:

When traveling to camps and lodges on our safaris you will meet up with other guests from different parts of the world and of various ages. To get the most out of your safari experience co-operation and harmony between you and your fellow guests is essential. Should any guest behave in such a way that it affects the enjoyment or safety of other guests, themselves, staff, or animals that guest will be warned and if need be, could be requested to leave the safari.

Crime:

Crime is no more prevalent in East & Southern Africa than anywhere else in the world, but as a tourist you are more likely to be targeted if you are not aware of your surroundings and taking reasonable care of your possessions. Take normal precautions of not carrying all your valuables while walking about and preferably go with others, particularly after dark. Keep any valuables locked in a safety deposit box at the hotel where you are staying. Never leave anything of value unattended under any circumstances, including lying visible inside a locked vehicle. Opportunistic crimes are as common here as anywhere else in the world.

Plastic Bag Ban:

Kenya joins over 40 countries that have made plastic bags illegal, in a positive effort to reduce the impact on our environment. However, there may be implications for our guests travelling to this region, as the use, manufacture and importation of all plastic bags is now illegal in Kenya.

The ban applies to:

- Carrier bags with handles & with or without gussets.
- Flat bags without handles & without gussets.

Please take note that if you are travelling to Nairobi, plastic bags that match the above description, including duty free bags, will be confiscated at the airport. There is however a bigger risk that if anyone is caught using these plastic bags the fine is KSH. 4,000,000 approximately USD 38,000 or prison sentences of up to four years.

It is our opinion that with immediate effect we advise our guests and our own teams to refrain from using all forms of 'disposable' plastic carrying bags in both main luggage and hand luggage, to avoid inconveniences and possibly prosecution.



Tiping and gratuities:

Tiping is custom in East & Southern Africa, but a gratuity or service fee is not required by law and is certainly not compulsory. If you would like to tip because you have received good service below is a brief guideline to assist you. This is shown in US\$ which are generally used throughout the region. In Botswana & South Africa however it is better to work on Pula and South African Rand respectively. In Kenya & Tanzania it is better to work on Kenya & Tanzanian Shillings respectively.

- *Camp/lodge and specialist guides* - we recommend around US\$ 10 per guest per day (if the guide has done a good job).
- *Mokoro paddlers and trackers* - we recommend that each paddler receives US\$ 5 per guest per day and that camp/lodge trackers receive US\$ 5 per guest per day.
- *General camp/lodge/hotel & guesthouse staff* - we recommend about US\$ 5 per guest per day for general staff (camp crew, housekeepers, chefs, waiting staff etc). This should be placed in the communal tip box, generally located at reception, and will be distributed equally amongst all the staff at a later stage.
- *Porters* - we recommend US\$ 2 per room delivered to.
- *Waiters* - in restaurants a tip of 10% to 15 % of the entire bill is customary, depending on the quality of the service.
- In accommodation establishments where meals are generally included in a package price, a tip is not necessary with the meal, but any tip you wish to leave should be put in the general 'tip box' at reception on departure.
- *Car guards* - the presence of a car guard deters vehicle related crime. The car guard may also fill up an empty parking meter if a parking inspector approaches. Tip car guards US\$ 1. If the meter is re-filled, reimburse the car guard the amount put in the meter and tip US\$ 2.
- *Petrol pump attendants* - a tip of US\$ 1 may be given, depending on the quality of the service. It is NOT customary to tip for re-fuelling only.
- *Officials and public servants* - never tip or attempt to bribe an official or public servant. Report any requests for bribes to us and note that bribery is punishable by imprisonment.

Respecting wildlife & safety in the bush:

- Wild animals must be treated with caution and respect - they are not tame and any attempt to approach, touch or feed them is prohibited without consent from your guide. This is especially important near lodges or campsites where animals may have become accustomed to human visitors.
- Please listen to the camp/lodge staff and guides. The safety precautions need to be taken seriously and strictly adhered to.
- Observe animals silently and with minimum disturbance to their natural activities. Loud talking on game drives can frighten animals away.
- Never attempt to attract an animal's attention. Do not imitate animal sounds, clap your hands, whistle, pound the vehicle or throw objects.
- Please respect your guide's judgment about proximity to animals. Do not insist to take the vehicle closer!



- Litter tossed on the ground (including cigarette butts) can choke or poison animals and birds as well as being unsightly.
- Refrain from smoking on game drives and in vehicles.
- We recommend you keep your tent zipped up or doors to your rooms closed when you are out to prevent unwanted visitors.
- Always look where you walk and wear closed shoes when walking about at night in case of scorpions or snakes.

Photography:

The choice of the correct camera equipment and film will determine the quality of your photographs on the trip. For good photography of birds and animals a good SLR camera and telephoto lens is necessary. A zoom lens can be extremely useful on safari and the minimum recommended size is 70 - 200 mm, though a 100 - 400 mm is ideal. Modern image stabilized lenses are best as they allow photographers to hand hold their cameras at slower shutter speeds with sharp results.

The last few hours before sunset and the first few after sunrise are the best times for photography, and polarizing filters can help reduce haze and glare during the day.

Spare batteries are essential and a storage device of some sort for digital images is recommended. Make certain you have enough digital card storage - most people take more photographs than they expect to. Camps and lodges have facilities for recharging batteries and storage devices. Strips for charging more than one device are suggested for more serious photographers.

For people using film, colour reversal film (slides) will give better quality results than print film. There are good high-speed films, 400 ASA, on the market that give good colour with very little grain - either Fuji or Kodak. This is especially useful when using a big lens in low light situations. The guides' personal preference is for slow film (either 50 or 100 ASA) as this gives almost perfect quality for normal light. However, you may consider going to faster film for larger lenses in low light conditions. The only disadvantage with the low ASA film is that you need good support, either a tripod or beanbag, for the early morning and evening shots.

Important note: Bring spare film (although film is available in most camps/lodges), ample digital card storage and a spare camera battery, as well as tripod and/or beanbag if you require them.

When photographing local people please always ask for permission first, or discuss the best approach with your guide. Most local people will be happy to be photographed but it is important to avoid offence by checking first. Care is needed near government buildings, army bases and similar sites of strategic importance - again the best approach is to ask permission first.

First Aid:

Although most hotels & lodges are equipped with a first aid kit, we suggest that you bring a small airtight container with a few well chosen articles, such as: plasters, travel sickness tablets, antiseptic cream, pain relieving tablets for headaches, indigestion tablets, sunscreen, eye drops, insect repellent, medication for upset stomachs and after sun moisturizer. We



remind any travellers who have any allergies i.e. insect stings, or an asthma condition, to pack the required medication.

Suggested packing list:

For clothing items we would recommend cotton over synthetic fibers, and muted colours for game viewing (rather than white or bright colours). Please ensure you bring sufficient warm clothing if you will be on safari during our winter months (May to September) as temperatures are colder than most visitors anticipate. Temperatures at the coast can be cold anytime of the year so do bring at least one fleece even if on safari during our summer.

- ✓ Quality sunglasses (ideally polarized)
- ✓ Sun hat with wide brim
- ✓ Golf-shirts, T-shirts, long-sleeved shirts
- ✓ Shorts/skirts
- ✓ Long trousers/slacks
- ✓ Smart evening wear for upmarket accommodation establishments
- ✓ Underwear (sports bra recommended on game drives as the roads can be bumpy and uneven) & socks
- ✓ Good walking shoes (trainers are fine)
- ✓ Sandals
- ✓ Swimming costume
- ✓ Warm fleece/sweater (especially in winter)
- ✓ Warm wind break, scarf & gloves for the cold winter months (May to September)
- ✓ Light rain gear for the summer months (November to April)
- ✓ Camera equipment & plenty of film
- ✓ If you wear contact lenses we recommend that you bring a pair of glasses in case of irritation from the dust & dryness
- ✓ BINOCULARS
- ✓ Newman's/Sasol/Robert's bird book if you are a keen birder
- ✓ Personal toiletries
- ✓ Malaria medication (if applicable)
- ✓ Moisturizing cream & lip salve
- ✓ Suntan lotion
- ✓ Insect repellent
- ✓ Basic personal medical kit (aspirins, plasters, Imodium, antiseptic cream, anti-histamine etc.)
- ✓ Tissues/wet wipes
- ✓ Torch
- ✓ Visas, tickets, passports, money, etc
- ✓ Waterproof/dustproof bags/cover for cameras

Last but not least - a good sense of humor and a desire to have "a holiday of a lifetime"!

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING APEX PHOTO SAFARIS!
