



Useful information for our Tour to South Africa & Beyond

Climate:

We will be visiting in late spring/early summer and should expect some rainfall although we hope to avoid the highest summer humidity. Afternoon thunderstorms are possible but are typically short-lived. Daily temperature ranges for October are:

Cape Town: ~55'f – 70'f

Jo'burg: ~51'f – 77'f

Kapama Game Reserve: ~63'f – 88'f

Victoria Falls: ~ 71'f – 96'f

Clothing:

Light cotton layers with a sweater or cardigan for evenings are ideal. Dress code is casual, even for dinner. Include a waterproof rain jacket with hood and comfortable, waterproof shoes with good traction. Flip-flops or sandals are a good idea for wearing as slippers around the hotel.

Please pack as light as possible – a carry-on sized suitcase is recommended, even if you check it for longer flights. You'll be glad you did and there will be opportunities for hand washing items.

Most of our hotels and lodges have beautiful pools so pack your swim gear!

Essentials & Extras:

High protection factor sunscreen and lip balm

Hat for sun protection

Powerpack

Liquid detergent (small) for hand washing as needed

A refillable water bottle

A few granola bars or similar for on-the-go snacks. (Non-perishable and heat-proof).

Hydration is key– bring electrolyte tablets with you as plain water alone is not sufficient for complete hydration. I use Nuun sport for every day but there are many options. 1 Nuun tablet = up to 24 fl. oz. Assume one tablet/day including all travel days. Each packet of Nuun has 10 tablets.

Safari-Specific:

These apply both to the main tour and post-tour, but items marked * are **strongly recommended** for the post tour, even though October is a lower-risk month for mosquito activity.

*Insect repellent: WHO recommends Picaridin (at 20%) and DEET (30%) as insect repellents for mosquitoes. Picaridin may irritate your skin less. A 20% Picaridin product lasts~ 6-8 hours but it is suggested you reapply every 4 hours although mosquitoes are mostly active around dusk.

Contact lens cleaner – this is a dusty environment.

Neutral and light-colored clothing blend in better with the surrounding environment. Khaki, beige, brown and green draws the least amount of attention and distraction when out on game drives. (Darker and brighter colors can attract unwanted mosquitoes and insects).

A warm hat for early morning game drives is suggested (maybe a thin beanie?)

*Long-sleeved shirts/pants are recommended for early mornings and evenings

*Wear socks with your shoes to protect your feet and ankles

*Use a bandana sprayed with repellent around your hat.

*Use the mosquito nets in your lodge!

*Anti malaria medication – don't forget to take it regularly as prescribed

Telephoto lens, lens cleaner and lots of memory cards!

Binoculars

Baggage:

Worth repeating: travel LIGHT! There are many instances where you will need to manage your bags on/off the coach for short stays as well as several domestic flights. Carry-on size is recommended even if you check it for the long-haul flight(s)

Refer to your carrier for weight and/or size limits for both carry-on and checked luggage.

Please pack any medications in your carry-on bag just in case your bag is lost for a time.

[AirTags](#) may be worth considering for tracking. Airlines do NOT always know where your luggage is 😞

Passports and Visas:

Main tour: For our American guests, [this page](#) contains a lot of helpful information.

All U.S. visitors to the South Africa must have a valid passport with at least **30 days validity** beyond your intended exit date together with two consecutive completely blank visa pages in your passports upon every arrival in South Africa. You will be denied entry if you do not have two consecutive blank visa pages.

US passport holders do NOT need a visitor visa to enter South Africa for 90days or less. Non-USA passport holders, including Canadian citizens please check [here](#) but do not purchase visas until advised to do so in writing.

Tour extension: All guests, regardless of citizenship, will need to purchase a \$60 multi-entry visa to Zimbabwe at the border. This needs to be paid in CASH – credit cards are not accepted. You are responsible for having this cash to hand when we cross the border.

Guests will need a valid US passport with at least **6 months validity** to enter both Zimbabwe and Botswana plus 2 consecutive, completely blank pages to enter Zimbabwe and 3 or more unused pages for Botswana.

Tourist visas are not required by US, UK, or Canadian citizens to enter Botswana. Many other citizens are also exempt. Please check the [Botswana e-visa website](#) if in doubt.

I recommend making a copy of your passport and carrying it in a separate area from your passport. Should it get lost or misplaced, it is much easier to have replaced if you have a copy available.

Medical records:

Anticipate the possible need to prove you are fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in order to book flights, board a plane, or enter some establishments. Regulations continue to evolve and are generally much more relaxed now so let's hope for the best while planning for the worst scenario. Carry a photocopy of your vaccination card (front and back) with you at all times. I also keep digital copies on my phone. You can do this by either taking a photograph and/or using the Notes app to take a scan. Store in a "medical" album/file to find it quickly.

Health:

Water: It is generally safe to drink faucet water and also to use it for brushing your teeth. However, if you have a sensitive stomach you may prefer to drink bottled water.

Malaria: While October is less problematic for mosquitos there are still precautions that should be taken. Preventative measures include using provided mosquito nets at night, using insect repellent and adjusting clothing for evenings/early mornings as mentioned already.

Main tour: Kapama Game Reserve is in a low-risk malaria area. Although anti-malaria medication is therefore not strictly needed, we strongly advise you to seek the advice of your doctor and consider taking it as a preventative measure anyway.

Tour extension to Victoria Falls and Botswana: 6 weeks prior to travel, please advise your doctor that you are traveling to this region and that *Plasmodium falciparum* which occurs in this area is resistant to chloroquine. Therefore, medicines that were effective five years ago such as Chloroquine, Proguanil and Maloprim may no longer be so effective. There are several other drugs on the market that are licensed for preventing malaria, which one to use will depend on your individual circumstances, so please consult your doctor. There is more information [here](#).

Yellow Fever: Zimbabwe, Botswana, and South Africa are not considered Yellow Fever risk zones. If you are traveling to additional countries within Africa, please consult your doctor and advise us if this will be *pre-tour*, as a Yellow Fever certificate may then be needed to enter South Africa.

Further information can be found on the **CDC website** for [South Africa](#), [Zimbabwe](#) and [Botswana](#).

Electricity:

220/240volt with sockets taking a round two-prong European plug so bring the necessary converter/adaptor to charge your phones, cameras etc.

Standard outlets look like this:



Adapters can be purchased from local supermarkets or [purchased online](#).

Prohibited items:

Since we are flying from the U.S., the usual restrictions for liquids, sharp items aerosols etc. apply here. Check your carrier for more information.

Medications: check with the [Embassy of South Africa](#) to ensure your medication is legal in South Africa. Always carry prescription medication in original packaging with your doctor's prescription.

Currency:

In South African the currency is the rand. In Zimbabwe, although the primary legal tender is the Zimbabwe dollar (ZWL) the US dollar is accepted for transactions at the official exchange rate (rands are not accepted). In Botswana the national currency is the Pula but the US dollar is widely accepted at lodges and hotels. (Those on the post-op tour are unlikely to need cash on our day trip here).

Credit Cards:

All international credit cards are accepted. Visa and Mastercard are possibly more widely accepted than Amex or Diners. Check with your issuing bank to see if they have foreign currency exchange fees. Many cards have done away with those fees, but it’s good to know in advance.

Also, notify your card company that you will be out of the country so they don’t freeze your card for unusual transactions.

ATMs:

ATMs are available in larger cities and towns

Eating Out:

Cape Town is a seafood lovers paradise – make the most of it! Ostrich is also recommended where available.

To give you a general sense of prices in restaurants:

ITEM	PRICE (rands)
Bottled water	25-30
Spirits	25 per shot
Bottle of good white wine	100-120 (or 35-50 per glass)
Bottle of good red wine	125-400 (or 50-75 per glass)
Pizza (large)	150
Steak (rump, sirloin, T-bone)	<200
Lamb dishes	<200

Rate of exchange (1/24/23) 1 rand = 0.058 USD i.e. 100 rand = \$5.81

Tips at restaurants or bars: 10% (This is taken care of for group meals)

Communication:

Please ensure at the very least you have texting enabled during our tour. I need to be able to reach you at all times in case of an emergency. I would also recommend either checking with your carrier to see what plans they offer or one of the following for communicating with loved ones back home:

Skype to go account

You can put money into the account and call anyone - cell phones or land lines. The person you are calling doesn’t need to have an account.

Or

Download the *What’s app* or *Messenger app*

This one is a little different in that everyone you call must have downloaded the app as well. You must have wi-fi* access to make the call but it's free and easy to use. You can also text for free.

Please remember when calling, we will be 10 hours ahead of PST.

*All of the hotels we are staying in have WI-FI but there will be instances when it is only available in public areas rather than your hotel room.