



# The Best of Kenya & Tanzania 2020

## **EXTEND YOUR TRIP**

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**Kenya's Masai Mara Game Reserve**

**Namibia's Impalila Island & Botswana's Chobe National Park**

**Your Travel Handbook**

# CONTENTS

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<b>Travel Documents &amp; Entry Requirements</b> . . . . .	3
Your Passport . . . . .	3
Visas Required . . . . .	3
Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents . . . . .	4
Overseas Taxes & Fees . . . . .	4
<b>Health</b> . . . . .	5
Is This Adventure Right for You? . . . . .	5
Steps to Take Before Your Trip . . . . .	6
Yellow Fever—Documentation Required . . . . .	6
Staying Healthy on Your Trip . . . . .	7
<b>Money Matters</b> . . . . .	10
Top Three Tips . . . . .	10
Local Currency . . . . .	10
How to Exchange Money . . . . .	11
ATMs . . . . .	12
Credit & Debit Cards . . . . .	12
Tipping Guidelines . . . . .	13
<b>Preparing for Your Trip</b> . . . . .	15
Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air . . . . .	15
Optional Tours . . . . .	15
Optional Tours: Reserve Before You Go . . . . .	16
Communications . . . . .	17
<b>Packing</b> . . . . .	19
Your Luggage . . . . .	20
Duffel Bag: Required . . . . .	20
Clothing Suggestions . . . . .	21
What to Bring . . . . .	21
Electricity . . . . .	25
<b>Climate</b> . . . . .	27
Climate Averages & Online Forecast . . . . .	27
<b>About Your Destinations</b> . . . . .	31
O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference . . . . .	31
Culture & Points to Know . . . . .	31
Responsible Safari Travel . . . . .	33
Shopping . . . . .	34
U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges . . . . .	35
<b>Demographics &amp; History</b> . . . . .	37
<b>Resources</b> . . . . .	48
Suggested Readings . . . . .	48
Suggested Movies . . . . .	50
Useful Websites . . . . .	52

# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

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## Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

## Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport

## Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** If you are taking the main trip only, you will need 4 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Kenya’s Masai Mara:** No additional pages needed.
- **Post-trip extension to Namibia’s Impalila Island & Botswana’s Chobe National Park:** You will need 16 additional pages, for a total of 20.
- **Stopover in Amsterdam:** You will need 2 more pages. Please add 2 to your total listed above.

*Please note: You might not use all of these pages on your adventure (when you return, some may still be blank) but local officials will want to see that you have them. While your Trip Experience Leaders will request that one page be stamped multiple times, this cannot be guaranteed and is at the discretion of the local official. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you have plenty of blank pages.*

## Visas Required

**We’ll be sending you a detailed Visa Packet with instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure.** In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. This info is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.

- **Kenya—visa required.** It is important that you get this visa in advance.

- **Tanzania—visa required.** Both the U.S. Department of State and the Tanzanian embassy highly recommended that you obtain your visa in advance. For this itinerary, Tanzania also requires proof that you've received the yellow fever vaccine. Please see “Yellow Fever—Documentation Required” for details.
- **Namibia, Botswana, and South Africa (optional post-trip extension)—no visas needed:** U.S. citizens do not need visas for stays of less than 90 days in these countries.
- **Zambia and/or Zimbabwe (optional post-trip extension)—visa required.** Depending on which side of the border your flight lands, you will *either* need one double-entry visa for Zimbabwe *or* two single-entry visas (one for Zimbabwe and one for Zambia). Either way, we recommend that you wait and get your visas onsite as this is the only option for Zimbabwe and the better option for Zambia.
- **The Netherlands (optional Amsterdam Stopover)—No visa needed.** A visa is not required for stays of up to 90 days.

### **Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?**

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **[www.pvsinternational.org](http://www.pvsinternational.org)**.

### **Traveling With a Minor?**

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

### **Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents**

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

### **Overseas Taxes & Fees**

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

# HEALTH

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## Is This Adventure Right for You?

**Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure.** We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

### PACING

- 7 locations in 17 days with one 1-night stay
- International flights to Amsterdam en route to Nairobi depart late in the day for an overnight flight, and 1 internal flight
- Airport transfers in Nairobi take approximately 1 hour

### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids
- You must be able to walk 1-2 miles unassisted and participate in 2-4 hours of physical activities each day
- Traveling in a safari vehicle over roads in poor condition can cause problems for travelers with back and leg pain
- Travelers in need of a CPAP machine may only bring one that runs on rechargeable batteries
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience

### CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures range from 50-100°F
- The hottest months are October-February, and May brings heavy rains, with the short rains coming in November

### TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Travel over bumpy, dusty terrain during overland transfers and game-viewing drives, and camp in tents built on uneven terrain
- Travel by 18-passenger coach and 4x4 closed Land Cruisers in Kenya and Tanzania
- 1 internal flight (1-2 hours long), several 8-10 hour days in safari vehicles
- 15-passenger aircraft with small seats

## ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES

- We spend 14 nights in comfortable but basic lodges and tented camps
- Our lodges use generator electricity and lantern lighting at night, and do not have air-conditioning. There could be a 1- to 5-minute walk from our tents to the main lodge
- All accommodations feature private bathrooms

## Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel> or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

## Yellow Fever—Documentation Required

**All travelers will need to bring EITHER proof of a yellow fever vaccination OR an official vaccination waiver in order to meet Tanzania's entry requirements (this also applies for all countries on the post-trip extension).**

While the CDC offers a wide range of vaccination and medication suggestions, there is one in particular that we'd like to draw your attention to—the yellow fever vaccine. For some countries, the yellow fever vaccination is a legal entry requirement, like a passport. For other countries, it is a health recommendation to protect you from getting sick. On this adventure, this vaccination is a legal entry requirement for Tanzania (as well as all countries on the post-trip extension)—but fortunately, authorities will accept a doctor's waiver in place of getting the actual shot.

The requirement applies to us because we'll be entering Tanzania from Kenya, which is considered an endemic country. **This means you might be asked for documentation on the vaccine when you cross the border from Kenya to Tanzania.** Therefore EITHER proof of a yellow fever vaccination OR an official vaccination waiver is a requirement for this trip.

You should discuss the vaccine with your doctor to see if he or she recommends it and if your health allows for it. (He or she can offer a suggestion tailored to your personal medical history.) If you and your doctor decide the vaccination is right for you, then he or she will issue you a Yellow Fever Card, also called an International Certificate of Vaccination. This is your proof of vaccination; you should bring it with you on the trip.

If you and your doctor decide the vaccination isn't right for you, then have your doctor issue an official vaccination waiver. An official waiver is a letter that meets these requirements:

- It must be on business letterhead paper.

- It must be signed by a doctor.
- It must be stamped using the same stamp that the doctor uses on a Yellow Fever Card.
- It must give the medical reason why you cannot get the vaccine, say how high the risk is, and cite an authority. (For example: Mr. Smith cannot receive the yellow fever vaccine due to a high risk of side effects as outlined in the Center for Disease Control’s guidelines for people over the age of 65.)

Whether you receive a Yellow Fever Card or an official vaccination waiver, keep it on your person (in your backpack or purse) so it is easy to find when you arrive or when you cross the border. You may not show anything at all when you cross the border—it all depends on the local official. But if you are asked, you must be able to produce your Yellow Fever Card OR your waiver.

### Medication Suggestions

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Prescription pain medication in the unlikely event of an injury in a remote location
- Motion sickness medicine, if you are susceptible (the roads are very bumpy).
- Anti-malaria medication for Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Check with the CDC and your doctor first because these medications can have strong side effects.
- Optional: Allergy and/or asthma medication. The roads can be very dusty which can trigger allergies or breathing complaints that may require prescription medications.

### Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>. (Pick the country and then follow the links to “Local Laws & Special Circumstances”; if you don’t see any medications specifically mentioned, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

## Staying Healthy on Your Trip

### Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.

- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

## Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Traveler Support team at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

## Water

- Tap water is not safe to drink. We recommend you use only bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth throughout this trip.
- During your adventure, you will receive one complimentary bottle of water each day at your lodgings, and during safari days, you'll also receive a second complimentary bottle of water in your safari vehicle. Additional bottled water is available for sale in the lodges. Prices vary, but generally fall in the \$3-4 range for a one-liter bottle. Carry a bottle in your daypack at all times.
- Bottled drinks and hot drinks that have been boiled are safe to drink.
- Before you buy a bottle, inspect it to make sure the cap is sealed properly. Carry a handkerchief to dry the tops of bottled drinks before and after opening.
- Please note that the boiled water can have a faintly smoky taste.
- At most lodges it is safe to use ice in your drinks, but check with your Trip Experience Leader first.

## Food

- The food served at our lodges is safe, including salads and fruits.
- Exercise caution when eating at small local restaurants or buying food from street vendors. Eat only food that is well done and is still hot.



- Since the tap water is not safe to drink, you should be mindful about eating salads or fruits outside of our lodges—they may have been washed in tap water. (Fruit that you peel yourself should be OK.)
- Your Trip Experience Leader will advise you if he/she feels that something is unsafe for you to eat.

*TIP: During this adventure you might be offered food that is strange and new to you. If you are offered food that you do not feel comfortable with, no one will feel offended if you politely decline; this is OK even during a home visit.*

## **Electricity Supply**

**A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays.** Travelers who rely on a CPAP machine must bring one that runs on rechargeable batteries.

# MONEY MATTERS

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## Top Three Tips

- **Bring enough cash to cover your needs for 80% of the trip and only expect to be able to use plastic (credit, debit, or ATM card) 20% of the time.** When budgeting, keep in mind that your biggest expenses will be tips, meals, and souvenirs. As a guideline, an average meal in this region costs between \$15 and \$20 per person including a tip.
- **A mix of small bills (\$1s-\$20s), in good condition, and printed after 2006.** You'll be able to pay in U.S. dollars in most places on this trip.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's more practical to view them as a last resort in the event of a special situation.

## Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like [www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter), your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

### Kenya

The official currency of Kenya is the Kenyan shilling (KSh), which is divided into 100 cents. One shilling is written Shs.1/-. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1000 shillings (written Shs.1000/-)
- Coins: 50 cents and 1, 5, 10, 20 and 40 shillings

In Kenya, U.S. dollars are accepted for payment in most situations. Newer bills (2006 or newer) in very good condition are strongly preferred. However, when paying in dollars, the exchange rate is not in your favor. You'll get a better rate by exchanging dollars for shillings and then paying in shillings.

### Tanzania

The basic unit of currency in Tanzania is the Tanzanian Shilling (TSh), which is divided into 100 senti.

- Banknotes: 500, 1,000, 2,000, 5,000 and 10,000 shillings
- Coins: 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 senti and 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 shillings

In Tanzania, U.S. dollars are accepted for payment in most situations. Bills in very good condition are strongly preferred (2006 or newer). Our regional office suggests that a mix of denominations (\$1, 5, 10, and 20s) is best/most convenient for paying with dollars. For exchanging, you'll get a better rate on large bills (\$50s and \$100s).

## **Namibia**

The official currency of Namibia is the Namibian dollar (NAD), which is divided into cents.

- Banknotes: 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 NAD
- Coins: 5, 10, and 50 cents and 1 and 5 NAD

U.S. dollars are not widely accepted in Namibia; the local currency or South African rand are preferred.

## **Botswana**

You'll be able to pay in U.S. dollars almost everywhere in Botswana. However, the official currency is the Pula (P), which is divided into 100 thebe.

- Bills come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 pula
- Coins come in denominations of 5, 10, 25, thebe and 1, 2 and 5 pula

## **Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe has recently brought back the Zimbabwean dollar (or Zimdollar) and announced plans to restrict foreign currency. However, you will still be able to pay for many purchases in U.S. dollars. At hotels and markets, you can use U.S. cash; at shops and supermarkets you may be able to use a Visa card to do transactions in U.S. dollars. When using U.S. cash, please note two things: 1. Bills in bad condition or older than the year 2000 are not accepted and 2. You may receive change in Zimdollars, which are useless outside of Zimbabwe (paying with exact change is recommended).

## **How to Exchange Money**

On this adventure, you won't need to exchange money because you can pay in U.S. dollars. But you will want a mix of small bills (\$1, 5, 10, and 20s), in good condition, printed after 2006. Large bills (\$50s and \$100s) will be hard to break, and bills in bad condition (dirty, worn, or torn) or printed before 2006 might be rejected, even by banks.

During the trip, if you choose to get local currency, the easiest way is to use a local ATM (your bank at home will convert and charge you in U.S. dollars). You can also exchange cash at some hotels and money exchange offices. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

*TIP: Large bills (\$50s and 100s) will receive a better exchange rate, but when paying with U.S. dollars, a mix of some \$1, 5, 10, and 20s would be better. It makes tipping and bargaining easier when you have exact change.*

## ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1-\$5 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

**Kenya:** International ATM networks are typically available in the larger cities like Nairobi, however when you are on safari in the bush, you will not have access to ATMs. Local ATMs may only accept cards from local banks and usually will not allow cash advances on credit cards; therefore it is best to bring a cash reserve large enough to pay for most expenses.

**Tanzania:** In larger cities, ATMs are typically available for major international networks. However, outside of large cities, ATMs may only accept cards from local banks and generally do not allow cash advances on credit cards. It is best to bring a cash reserve large enough to pay for most expenses.

**Namibia:** ATMs are typically found in larger cities, such as Windhoek. In the bush, there is no access to ATMs. Local ATMs may only accept cards from local banks and usually will not allow cash advances on credit cards; therefore it is best to bring a cash reserve large enough to pay for most expenses.

**Botswana:** The places we visit in Botswana are generally out in the bush where there are no ATMs.

**Zimbabwe:** ATMs are not to be relied on. A few are available in Victoria Falls, but they are consistently out of money. If you don't have enough cash on hand for Zimbabwe, your best bet is to use an ATM at one of the regional airports outside of Zimbabwe, such as Livingston or Jo'burg. Then convert the money you get (which will be in local currency) to U.S. dollars at the exchange desk.

## Credit & Debit Cards

Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although the Discover card is accepted in some countries outside the U.S., it is not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

**Kenya:** Credit cards are becoming more common in Kenya, but are not as widely accepted as they are in the U.S. Many camps, lodges, and shops will be cash only. Businesses that do accept cards tend to use a slow approval process that may involve calling your credit card company to get authorization.

**Tanzania:** Although credit cards are becoming more common, they are not as widely accepted in Tanzania as they are in the U.S. Many camps, lodges, and shops will be cash only and businesses that do accept credit cards may use a slow approval process that sometimes involve calling your credit card company to get authorization.

**Namibia:** Credit cards are more commonly accepted in Namibia, but many camps and lodges will be cash only. Businesses that do accept credit cards tend to use a slow approval process that may involve calling your credit card company for authorization.

**Botswana:** Credit cards are rarely accepted.

**Zimbabwe:** Credit cards are only somewhat accepted. You can usually use them at hotels in Victoria Falls, high-end shops, pharmacies or supermarkets. (In contrast, camps/bush lodges, street vendors, and small souvenir shops tend to be cash only.) Of the major credit cards, Visa is the most useful as it is accepted in more places and may let you process the transaction in U.S. dollars. MasterCard is not as well-known and both American Express and Discover are not accepted at all.

*If possible, we recommend using credit/debit cards at supermarkets and pharmacies to avoid issues with making or receiving change.*

## **Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel**

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

## **Tipping Guidelines**

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines.

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$7-\$10 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader

is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*

- **If you are joining the Kenya's Masai Mara optional extension**, a driver-guide will accompany you for the extension and his or her tips are included.
- **Housekeeping staff at city hotels:** \$1-2 per room, per night. *This only applies to the hotels in Nairobi (main trip and pre-trip extension) and on the Amsterdam Stopover. Tipping for housekeepers at tented camps and safari lodges is included as they are part of the camp/lodge staff.*

*Please Note:* Your tour price includes gratuities on the main trip and optional extensions for local guides, drivers, lodge and camp staff, driver-guides, and luggage porters that may assist you during the scheduled activities on your adventure. All tips are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars. Please do not use personal or traveler's checks for tips.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

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### Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

#### Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Personalized Air:** You booked international air with us, and have customized it in some way. If you have customized your trip's dates to arrive early, stay longer, or stop on your own in a connecting city, airport transfers will NOT be included. You must also arrange your own accommodations for any additional nights. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Account at [www.oattravel.com/myaccount](http://www.oattravel.com/myaccount) under "My Reservations".

#### Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Traveler Support team at **1-800-221-0814**.

*If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: [www.rome2rio.com](http://www.rome2rio.com).*

When booking your international flights, please also note that the tour will end on Day 18 of the base tour (Day 24 of the post-trip extension) for your overnight flight back to the United States.

#### Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

#### What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.

- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Account at [www.oattravel.com/myaccount](http://www.oattravel.com/myaccount)).

## Optional Tours: Reserve Before You Go

We strongly recommend that you reserve the following optional tours in advance. Unless otherwise noted, the deadline to do so is 45 days prior to your departure. Occasionally, space will be available for booking onsite, but this not guaranteed. Optional tours with O.A.T. can only be purchased with a credit card (Visa or MasterCard) or a debit card with credit card functionality. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "OPT Boston" (depending on your credit card company).

### ***Sunrise Safari & Hot Air Balloon Ride***

If you choose to take this optional tour, plan on waking up before dawn as we'll begin with an early morning game-viewing drive. Then we'll retreat under the shade of a nearby acacia tree where we'll enjoy breakfast in the bush with a celebratory glass of sparkling wine. Following breakfast, our excursion continues with a breathtaking hot air balloon ride over the Serengeti. With a certified, professional pilot at the controls, we'll glide over the majestic savannas at dawn, when the morning light bathes the plains in a golden hue. There's simply no better vantage point from which to appreciate the sheer vastness of the Serengeti's more than 5,700 square miles of plains, riverine bush, and acacia woodlands. Once we land, we'll return to our camp to reunite with any travelers who chose not to take this optional tour.

This optional tour is offered during the main trip. The cost is \$570 per person.

***Please note:*** *This tour is pre-sold only. Due to limited space, it is strongly advised that you reserve this optional tour at least 45 days prior to departure. It is also dependent on wind conditions, and may be canceled at the discretion of the balloon operators.*



## Sunrise Balloon Safari

Rise before dawn in order to catch the sweeping vista of the morning light over Masai Mara. View the game reserve from a bird's eye perspective as you gently float for an hour over the grassy plains. Celebrate touchdown with a sparkling wine-style picnic breakfast in the bush before returning to camp mid-morning. **Please note:** *This tour is only available on select departures and must be purchased at least 45 days prior to departure. Optional tour may be sold on-site, if available. Prices are subject to change.*

This optional tour is offered during the Kenya's Masai Mara Game Reserve trip extension. The cost is \$540 per person.

**Please note:** *This tour is only available on select departures and must be purchased at least 45 days prior to departure. Optional tour may be sold on-site, if available. Prices are subject to change.*

## Communications

One of the advantages of a safari is the chance to “unplug” and unwind—but the trade-off is that you won't have the same access to the Internet, email, or phone service that you would back at home.

Cell phone or Internet service will be available in some places, but not all. Even basic telephone and email service is not always available in the bush, where you will be spending much of your time. You won't be completely out of touch—our bush camps and safari lodges do have satellite radio service. However, the satellite radio service is usually for emergencies only. Outside of the bush, you'll be able to send emails and make phone calls in large cities like Nairobi.

### Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone is “unlocked”, meaning it can accept a local SIM card. If your cell is “unlocked” then you will be able to purchase a local SIM for it and then buy minutes with “Pay as You Go” cards, so that you have a local contact number for your friends and family.

**Please understand that throughout Africa, good cell phone service is only available in large towns or cities.**

## Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype or FaceTime. These services are usually less expensive than making a traditional call, but you'll need a Wi-Fi connection and the calls may count towards your phone plan's data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

## Calling Cards & 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.). One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

## Internet

Internet access on this adventure will be mostly limited to cities and towns. In many cases, it will not be WiFi, but rather public computers in the hotel lobby or business center. The hotels and lodges that do offer WiFi will usually charge for the service. There is usually no Internet service at all in tented camps.

## Receiving Calls from Home

To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one is to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

It is worth noting that **most of the time the phone number for a bush camp or bush lodge is for a central office in a nearby city**; they take a message and then relay it to you in the bush by the satellite radio service. Please explain to your friends and family that there might be a delay in reaching you when you are on safari, and it's best if they only try to reach you in case of an emergency.

## How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

**Kenya:** +254

**Botswana:** +267

**Tanzania:** +255

**Zimbabwe:** +263

**Namibia:** +264

## PACKING

### Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person.
Weight restrictions	Combined weight of checked and carry-on luggage: Up to <b>33 lbs total</b> .
Size Restrictions	Standard airline size: Checked luggage should not exceed 62 linear inches (length+width+depth) and carry-on should not exceed 45 linear inches.
Luggage Type	<b>Must use a duffel bag</b> as your checked luggage.

TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS
Same as the main trip.

REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS
<p>EXCESS BAGGAGE CANNOT BE TAKEN.</p> <p><b>Type of luggage:</b> Use of a duffel bag is a requirement on this adventure. We ask that you use the complimentary O.A.T. safari bag that we will be sending you.</p> <p><b>Packing light:</b> Laundry service is offered at most of our lodges, except in Tarangire and the Serengeti, where water is at a premium. Prices are reasonable; although dryers are rare, so clothing will take longer to dry during the rainy seasons. Previous travelers have had a lot of success with packing fewer clothes and having laundry done. This is especially useful if you are bringing extra camera equipment. Underwear will not be included in this service, so please plan accordingly.</p>

#### Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.

- The luggage limits above are based on your regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

## Your Luggage

### Duffel Bag: Required

On safaris, the room allowed for checked luggage is limited one piece per person.

- Use of a duffel bag is a requirement on this adventure.
- **We ask that you use the complimentary O.A.T. duffel bag that we will be sending you** because it has been approved for this safari by our regional office in Africa. Suitcases of any kind, hard-sided luggage, or luggage with an internal frame are not allowed. If you bring something other than a cloth duffel bag without an internal frame, your luggage may not fit on the small planes or in the safari vehicles we use on this adventure. We'd like you to have your luggage with you on the whole adventure—so a duffel bag is key.
- The O.A.T. duffel bag has wheels and measures 28" x 13" x 11"
- Previous travelers have recommended adding an identifier to your duffel bag, such as a scarf or colored tape, to set it apart from the others.

**Important Note:** *Plastic bags are no longer allowed in Kenya and Tanzania. They will be confiscated if found, and may incur fines or even jail time. Consider bringing an empty nylon bag folded into your main suitcase instead for laundry or dirty shoes. For more details, see the packing list section of this Handbook.*

*TIP: When traveling with a companion we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.*

### Carry-on Bag

You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during game drives.

### Luggage Handling on Arrival

Airport porters are not allowed in the customs hall area. When you land, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and then clear customs. When you exit the airport building, your driver will load your luggage into the coach.

## Locks

For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure. *TIP: Most camps or lodges do not have personal safes in the tents/rooms. Instead, valuables, passports, and money can be secured in lockable canvas bags that are put into a locked central safe. Camps and lodges provide the bags and the locks for this purpose.*

## Clothing Suggestions

### Functional Tips

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, we suggest several layers of clothing. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, look for fabrics that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel, with features like wrinkle-resistant fabric or built-in sun protection.

- **Layers for game drives:** Many game drives are in the early morning or late evening. Even at the height of summer, these times of day are cooler than the afternoon. Therefore we suggest bringing a piece that you can wear over your clothing for cooler mornings and remove as the day heats up (windbreaker, jacket, sweater, sweatshirt, etc.). And just a reminder: south of the equator, the seasons are reversed. Travelers on summer departures will want to bring more than one layer—it is winter in Africa.
- **Footwear:** You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip, and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. We recommend you wear sturdy walking shoes or similar supportive sports shoes that offer good traction. We also recommend you bring a pair of rubberized sandals (i.e., Tevas) for showering, wearing around the lodge, and general warm weather use.

### Fashion Dos and Don'ts

- **Do wear muted earth tones** (beige, khaki, etc.) because they don't show dirt easily, coordinate well, don't distract animals, and don't attract tsetse flies like black and blue.
- **Don't wear white or very brightly colored clothing.** These colors have traditionally been used to keep animals away, and even color-blind animals can spot dark and light shades like black and white, which is why white is a danger signal for some species.
- **Do wear clothes that are functional and casual.** There's no need for formal or dressy clothing. In local communities, and to some extent in the lodges, your dress should be modest and conservative.

## What to Bring

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. You may also want to consult the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

## Year-Round Clothing Checklist

- Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- Trousers and/or jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best.
- Shorts: Cut long for modesty. Even during hotter months, you'll want at least one pair of long pants for early morning game drives.
- Shoes and socks: Comfortable walking/ running shoes or low-cut hiking shoes, with arch support. Light hiking boots will suffice; there is no heavy hiking during the trip, but hiking boots should offer better support and traction than shoes. We also recommend you bring a pair of rubberized sandals (i.e., Tevas) for showering, wearing around the lodge, and general warm weather use. Bring plenty of socks, you may find yourself wishing to change a couple times a day.
- Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- Wide-brim sun hat or visor for sun protection
- Underwear: Most camps and lodges will not include "smalls" (underwear) in their laundry service. This is partly for cultural reasons and partly because many properties still do laundry by hand. It is usually OK for you wash them yourself in your room. For women travelers we suggest close-fitting brassieres, such as sports bras—the roads are very bumpy.
- Sleepwear
- Optional: Swimsuit and cover-up

## Seasonal Clothing Recommendations

### For spring and summer (September-March):

- Walking shorts
- A jacket or sweater. Even in summer it can be cool during early morning game drives.

### For the rainy season (November-March):

Your laundry will take more than a day to be returned dry because most lodges don't have dryers.

- Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- Hood/lens cap/waterproof bag for camera

### **For fall and winter (May-August):**

It's colder than you think in winter, especially during early morning game drives or at night in a tented camp. Warm clothing is essential, so add these items your packing list.

- Long-sleeved shirts in a warm, heavy fabric for cool nights, i.e., flannel or knit
- A warm, insulated jacket in addition to a wool or fleece sweater. If you own a light or medium-weight insulated field jacket or parka, you can use that.
- Warm hat, gloves, and a scarf (especially useful on the game-drive vehicles)
- Warm sleepwear
- Long underwear. It keeps you warm but doesn't take up a lot of space or weigh much.

### **Essential Items**

- Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. Lodges provide shampoo and soap but most lodges do not provide washcloths.
- Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses; sunglasses
- Sunscreen: SPF 15 or stronger
- Insect repellent—the lodges may provide insect repellent but you may want to bring your own. We suggest using a kind with DEET between 30–35% strength.
- Flashlight or headlamp: Consider a small but powerful LED version or a version with an alternative power source (wind-up, solar powered).
- Lightweight binoculars: To avoid disturbing the animals' natural activities, we stop the vehicle at a respectful distance. By having your own binoculars, you'll be able to enjoy the experience more. Models such as 8 x 21 or 6 x 16 provide suitable magnification and illumination. 10x models are usable, but are usually heavy, expensive, and require a very steady hand.
- Pocket-size tissues
- Moist towelettes (baby wipes) and/or anti-bacterial "water-free" hand cleanser
- Electrical transformer & plug adapters. We do not recommend electric shavers or hair dryers, as electricity is limited at many of our lodges.
- Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger

## Medicines & First Aid Gear

- Your own prescription medicines
- Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach. Maybe a cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, or antibiotic cream.
- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes
- Optional: Motion sickness medicine if you are susceptible (the roads are very bumpy).
- Optional: Anti-malarial medication—discuss with your doctor first
- Optional: Medication for allergies or asthma if you are susceptible (the roads are dusty)

## Optional Gear

- Eye drops: The dry air and dusty roads can cause itchy eyes.
- Surgical masks, to cover your mouth during game drives on dusty terrain
- Inflatable seat cushion for bumpy roads
- Travel alarm or travel watch with alarm
- Hanging toiletry bag (with hook to hang on doorknob and pockets to organize items)
- Basic sewing kit
- Hand-wash laundry soap
- Reading materials
- Travel journal/note pad and pens
- Field guide: A small, lightweight guide so you are not encumbered during game drives.
- Phrase book
- Small gift for Home-Hosted visit
- Folding walking staff, sold in most camping stores



## Do Not Bring Single-Use Plastic Bags

Single-use plastic bags are banned in Kenya and Tanzania. If you like to bring a bag for shoes or laundry, we recommend a lightweight nylon bag, packing cube, or reusable cloth tote instead. We also recommend a reusable toiletry bag instead of a Ziploc-style bag. Violations of the ban could result in fines or even imprisonment, so please double-check your luggage *before* you depart. Rwanda also has a similar ban (unless the bags are biodegradable)—travelers on the extension there, please take note.

## Electricity

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

### Voltage

Electricity in Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe is 220–240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, MP3 players, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

### Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you’ll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because there are many different types of plugs in this region, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

**Kenya:** G

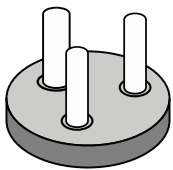
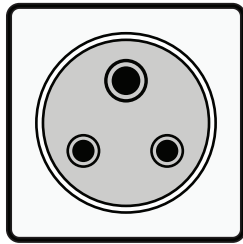
**Tanzania:** D or G

**Namibia:** M (a larger version of D)

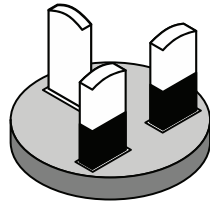
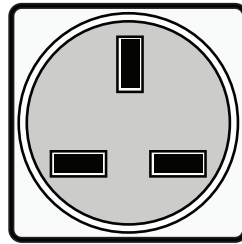
Botswana: M

Zimbabwe: M or G

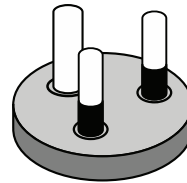
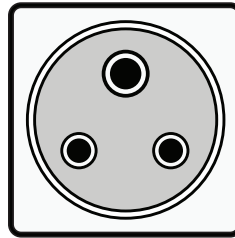
Type D



Type G



Type M



### Availability

In the remote lodges, the generator that supplies electricity may operate during limited hours. It is possible to recharge camera batteries, but only while the generator is running. Therefore, bringing two batteries—one to use while the other is recharging—is recommended. Electric current is usually adequate to run an electric razor, but not a hairdryer. The lighting at the lodges may not be as bright as you are used to; a small LED flashlight can be useful. *Although you may not have any trouble with electricity on this trip, prepare for the worst case scenario and bring things that can be battery operated. Always use new batteries and bring spares.*

**A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays.** Travelers who rely on a CPAP machine must bring one that runs on rechargeable batteries.

## CLIMATE

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**Kenya:** The climate in Kenya varies with the terrain—the coast is tropical, the interior temperate, and the north is arid. The Masai Mara Reserve, which is in the southwest, is at a moderate-to-high elevation (4,900–7,100 feet above sea level). This makes the climate wetter and more temperate than other parts of the country, with temperatures usually falling in the range of 85–65 degrees. The rainy seasons are April–May and November; the dry season is from July to October.

**Tanzania:** The varied terrain of Tanzania is what causes the biggest differences in climate—from the almost tropical coastal area, to the comfortable central plateau, to the chilly hills and mountains near the Kenyan border. Since our main itinerary takes us to northern and eastern Tanzania, plan on days that are warm or hot (up to the 70s and the 80s) and nights that are chilly or cold (as low as the 50s or 40s).

Like many countries near the equator, the seasons in Tanzania are best described by rainfall and humidity instead of temperature. The first wet or rainy season in the north runs from March to May. The second wet or rainy season is generally November and December. Although the rest of the year could be called dry season, January and February are especially dry (if you measure by number of days it rains). Humidity is strongest in the mornings during the wet seasons, but because our adventure is in the less humid north, the yearly average for the areas we visit is only about 60% relative humidity—roughly the same as Philadelphia.

**Botswana:** Most of Botswana is considered desert or semi-desert. It is usually comfortably warm, but can get hot, especially between October and March, when mid-day temperatures can get as high as 110–120 °F. Rain is quite rare, but can occur even in the driest months.

**Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe:** Victoria Falls is humid and hot most of the year, with temperatures often in the 90s.

**Netherlands:** As in most areas of northwest Europe, the weather in the Netherlands is frequently rainy and can be very changeable from day to day all through the year. During spring, a fine, warm spell may last for weeks, or a stretch of cool, unsettled weather may prevail. Daytime temperatures are generally mild, averaging in the upper 50s and low 60s, but weather shifts do occur on a regular basis. In summer, fine warm periods may last for weeks on occasions; but then again, the weather could also be cool and unsettled. By autumn, overcast skies occur more frequently, and the overall weather pattern consists of longer, heavier, rains and colder temperatures. Generally, the flat countryside of the Netherlands makes it a rather windy place in all seasons. In the past, the Dutch relied on this weather element to run the windmills that pumped the seawater from the low-lying lands.

### Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to go online to [www.oattravel.com/myaccount](http://www.oattravel.com/myaccount) for your 10-day forecast.

## Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	NAIROBI, KENYA			AMBOSELI NATIONAL PARK, KENYA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
<b>JAN</b>	77 to 58	93 to 41	1.8	85 to 63	63	1.7
<b>FEB</b>	80 to 58	89 to 35	1.7	89 to 64	58	1.2
<b>MAR</b>	80 to 60	92 to 38	2.9	88 to 65	61	3.4
<b>APR</b>	76 to 61	96 to 52	6.3	85 to 65	65	4.8
<b>MAY</b>	74 to 59	96 to 56	4.7	83 to 62	66	1.1
<b>JUN</b>	73 to 56	94 to 53	1.2	81 to 58	61	0.1
<b>JUL</b>	71 to 54	93 to 52	0.5	80 to 56	59	0.1
<b>AUG</b>	72 to 54	92 to 49	0.5	81 to 57	58	0.1
<b>SEP</b>	76 to 55	92 to 41	1.0	85 to 58	53	0.1
<b>OCT</b>	78 to 58	93 to 40	1.7	86 to 62	53	1.1
<b>NOV</b>	75 to 60	96 to 51	4.7	84 to 64	64	6.8
<b>DEC</b>	75 to 59	96 to 49	3.0	82 to 64	70	4.7

MONTH	KARATU, TANZANIA			SERENGETI PARK, TANZANIA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
<b>JAN</b>	62 to 52	--	2.1	81 to 59	--	3.6
<b>FEB</b>	59 to 52	--	1.9	81 to 59	--	3.8
<b>MAR</b>	61 to 53	--	4.0	81 to 61	--	5.2
<b>APR</b>	64 to 56	--	6.4	79 to 61	--	5.0
<b>MAY</b>	61 to 55	--	3.1	77 to 57	--	2.4
<b>JUN</b>	55 to 50	--	0.5	77 to 55	--	1.1
<b>JUL</b>	58 to 51	--	0.2	75 to 55	--	0.5
<b>AUG</b>	60 to 50	--	0.1	77 to 57	--	1.0
<b>SEP</b>	65 to 50	--	0.1	81 to 59	--	1.1
<b>OCT</b>	68 to 52	--	0.6	82 to 59	--	1.5
<b>NOV</b>	67 to 54	--	3.5	81 to 59	--	3.5
<b>DEC</b>	64 to 54	--	3.3	82 to 61	--	4.1

MONTH	ARUSHA, TANZANIA			KISUMU, KENYA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
<b>JAN</b>	84 to 50	82	2.3	85 to 66	81 to 42	3.5
<b>FEB</b>	84 to 51	84	3.3	85 to 67	82 to 41	3.9
<b>MAR</b>	81 to 53	95	7.0	85 to 67	83 to 43	6.7
<b>APR</b>	77 to 57	95	14.5	82 to 67	91 to 53	7.1
<b>MAY</b>	72 to 52	--	8.3	81 to 66	92 to 54	6.7
<b>JUN</b>	70 to 48	--	1.3	80 to 64	90 to 52	3.5
<b>JUL</b>	69 to 49	--	0.6	81 to 63	88 to 48	2.8
<b>AUG</b>	72 to 48	--	0.8	82 to 64	87 to 46	2.8
<b>SEP</b>	76 to 47	--	0.8	83 to 64	85 to 44	3.5
<b>OCT</b>	80 to 51	94	1.4	84 to 66	82 to 43	3.9
<b>NOV</b>	81 to 51	98	4.4	83 to 66	85 to 47	5.1
<b>DEC</b>	81 to 50	91	4.0	84 to 66	82 to 43	3.5

MONTH	KASANE, BOTSWANA			VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
<b>JAN</b>	87 to 67	--	5.3	86 to 65	73	6.6
<b>FEB</b>	87 to 67	--	5.3	85 to 64	77	5.0
<b>MAR</b>	88 to 66	--	2.8	86 to 63	69	2.8
<b>APR</b>	87 to 61	--	0.9	85 to 57	60	1.0
<b>MAY</b>	84 to 56	--	0.1	81 to 49	53	0.1
<b>JUN</b>	79 to 50	--	--	77 to 43	52	--
<b>JUL</b>	79 to 49	--	--	77 to 42	44	--
<b>AUG</b>	85 to 54	--	--	82 to 47	37	--
<b>SEP</b>	91 to 61	--	0.1	89 to 55	33	0.1
<b>OCT</b>	94 to 67	--	0.8	92 to 63	35	1.1
<b>NOV</b>	92 to 69	--	2.5	90 to 65	57	2.5
<b>DEC</b>	89 to 68	--	5.0	86 to 65	71	6.8

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS</b>		
	<b>Temp. High-Low</b>	<b>% Relative Humidity (am-pm)</b>	<b>Average # of Days with Rainfall</b>
<b>JAN</b>	41 to 34	91 to 86	8
<b>FEB</b>	42 to 32	91 to 79	11
<b>MAR</b>	48 to 37	92 to 74	9
<b>APR</b>	53 to 40	90 to 66	12
<b>MAY</b>	61 to 46	87 to 62	12
<b>JUN</b>	66 to 52	89 to 66	9
<b>JUL</b>	69 to 55	90 to 68	12
<b>AUG</b>	70 to 55	91 to 65	11
<b>SEP</b>	64 to 51	93 to 72	10
<b>OCT</b>	57 to 46	93 to 78	9
<b>NOV</b>	48 to 39	92 to 85	7
<b>DEC</b>	44 to 39	92 to 88	7

## ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS

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### **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference**

During your adventure you'll be accompanied by one of our local, expert Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

### **Culture & Points to Know**

#### **Keep an Open Mind**

- This is not a typical tour, and the itinerary you follow is subject to change. This is Africa—weather, the political situation, migration of game, fuel availability, road conditions, and flight schedule changes may all impact your trip.
- In some cases, they may change the sequence of places visited, or we may not follow the trip itinerary exactly as published.
- Poverty is prevalent in Africa, so be prepared to witness a lower standard of living during our visits to local villages and schools.

#### **Accommodations**

- Our hotels and lodges are comfortable, but not luxurious.
- There can be occasional problems with electricity, hot water, and air conditioning (where it exists in the cities; there is not air conditioning in the safari camps).
- The roads within and between the parks can be dusty and very bumpy.
- Near the towns, some roads may be littered with trash.
- Water is scarce in the parks. We ask that you conserve water when washing, and shower only once each day.
- Some tented camps and lodges may be located outside the border to the national parks and game reserves. This allows us to offer a diverse range of activities, such as nature walks, in addition to entering the parks for game drives.

## **Meals**

Each morning, we have a full breakfast including eggs, cereal, toast or bread with jam and butter, fresh or tinned fruit. Most lunches in the lodges are served buffet-style, and typically include meats, stews, vegetables, rice, potatoes, and dessert. Lodge dinners are usually served at table, and include soup and breads, a main entree such as chicken, meat, or fish, with a vegetable side dish, followed by dessert and cheese board.

Most of our meals are from the familiar Western cuisines, but we'll mix this up with characteristic African fare: you can try ugali, a maize meal dish, nyama na mtuzi, a meat stew, or sukuma wiki, fried green collards. Beverages such as tea and coffee are served at all meals.

During your adventure, you will receive one complimentary bottle of water each day at your lodgings, and during safari days, you'll also receive a second complimentary bottle of water in your safari vehicle. Additional bottled water is available for sale in the lodges. Prices vary, but generally fall in the \$3-4 range for a one-liter bottle.

## **Safari Vehicles**

In Kenya we'll travel in seven-passenger minivans with pop-up roof for game viewing. In Tanzania, we'll travel in seven-passenger stretch Land Rovers with pop-up or flip-top roof hatches for game viewing. In both vehicles, six seats are in the back, with a window at each seat; and one seat is in front, with a view through the front windshield. The Trip Experience Leader will ensure that seats are rotated. Agility and balance are required to board and disembark these vehicles, and we will change vehicles at border crossings per government regulations.

*Reminder: The roads in Tanzania and Kenya can be very bumpy, and there will be times when you are "off-roading" over rugged terrain for game-viewing drives. Some days we'll spend nearly all day (8-10 hours) in the vehicle, however, there will be breaks along the way.*

## **Safety & Security**

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. Carry a one-day supply of cash in your pocket. Carry most of your money, and your passport, in a travel pouch or money belt under your shirt. Replenish your pocket supply when you are in a safe and quiet place, or in our vehicle. Do not leave valuable items unattended in your room. Almost every lodge offers use of a hotel safe at the front desk.

## **Pickpockets**

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful. Con artists sometimes target travelers.



Be careful when taking photos from the vehicle in towns or city centers. It is not unheard of for thieves to reach inside the open window while you are distracted and grab cameras or purses. If you're taking photos out of an open window in a crowded area, have someone else in the group watch over your valuables.

## **Language Barrier**

You can have some great “conversations” with local people who do not speak English, even if you don't speak a word of the local language. Indeed, this non-verbal communication can be a highly rewarding part of travel. To break the ice, bring along some family photographs, or a few postcards of your hometown. If you want to meet kids, bring a puppet or other interactive toy. Your Trip Experience Leader can help get the ball rolling.

Your attire is a key part of your non-verbal presentation. Your clothing should show a respect for local tradition. In small towns or near villages, you should dress in a relatively modest style—avoid revealing or tight-fitting outfits. The application of this guideline varies. You will see people in cities and large towns dressed in a modern style. And, of course, many foreign tourists are not sensitive to this at all. But you should dress modestly if you want to earn the respect of the local people.

## **Taking Photographs**

The etiquette of photographing most people in the countries on your itinerary is about the same as it would be on in your hometown. Some tribal members have particular concerns about photography. They know that professional photographers have profited from selling their images, and they will often ask for money in exchange for you taking their picture. Try to set a clear understanding when photographing tribal people, even from a distance.

In general, you need permission to take a close-up, as you would at home, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph an older person. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK. Your Trip Experience Leader can help.

## **Responsible Safari Travel**

We do our best to have a minimum negative impact on local cultures and the natural environment in every country we operate trips. Here's how you can assist in this effort.

### **Respecting Wildlife**

- Observe the animals silently and with a minimum of disturbance to their natural activities. Loud talking on a game drive can frighten the animals away.
- Never attempt to attract an animal's attention. Don't imitate animal sounds, clap your hands, pound on the vehicle, or throw objects. Failure to obey this rule could result in your removal from a National Park by one of the Park Rangers on patrol.

- Please respect your driver-guides' judgment about your proximity to wildlife. Don't insist that he or she take the vehicle closer so you can get a better photograph. A vehicle driven too close can hinder a hunt or cause animals to abandon a hard-earned meal.
- Litter tossed on the ground can choke or poison animals and birds.
- Never attempt to feed or approach any wild animal on foot. This is especially important near lodges or in campsites where animals may have become accustomed to human visitors. Failure to adhere to this could cause you to be bitten and need immediate rabies shots, which are unpleasant and costly.
- Smoking is not allowed on game drives. The dry African bush ignites very easily, and a flash fire can harm hundreds of animals.

### **Conserving the Natural Environment**

- Minimize the disposable items you bring on the trip and dispose of your trash properly.
- Ask whether plastic drinking water bottles can be recycled. Most days, it's better to keep your empty bottles with you until you reach your hotel.
- Stay on established trails to avoid damaging plants.
- Don't pick any vegetation, or remove any item of biological interest.

## **Shopping**

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

### **Returns**

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

### **Crafts & Souvenirs**

#### **East Africa**

Traditional souvenirs include woodcarvings, gems and gemstone jewelry, batik artwork, traditional African woven cloths, hand-woven carpets and mats, leather goods, Maasai beadwork, fine basketry, and excellent coffee and tea.

## **Mokonde**

The authentic woodcarvings called mokonde are made only in Tanzania, and are prized by collectors worldwide. Usually made of ebony, traditional mokonde art depicts spirit gods, ancestors, and half-human, half-animal figures. Today mokonde has been adapted to include figures of wildlife. You can find smaller figures for less than \$20. Depending on size, style, and quality, larger pieces cost from \$50 to \$500.

## **Bargaining**

Some shops have fixed prices. In the open-air markets prices are usually flexible and negotiating is normal. The only rule is that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change. For bargaining in East Africa, our Trip Experience Leaders suggest that you ask how much the item is, and start your bidding at a quarter of that price, working your way up to half the asking price. This is a good rule of thumb for getting the “right” price.

## **Namibia**

Namibia offers many fine craft items at good prices. Traditional souvenirs include gems and gemstone jewelry, batik artwork, traditional African woven cloths, stone and wood sculptures, leather goods, bead work, and fine basketry.

## **Southern Africa**

Traditional souvenirs include gems and gemstone jewelry, batik artwork, traditional African woven cloths, stone and wood sculptures, leather goods, beadwork, and fine basketry.

## **U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges**

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov) has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.

- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

**When buying gemstones—such as Tanzanite set in jewelry—make sure to ask if it comes with a certificate *before* purchasing**, as often transactions that have been completed cannot be reversed due to the TRA (Tanzania Revenue Authority) receipting system.

# DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

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## Kenya

### Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 224,080 square miles
- **Capital:** Nairobi
- **Languages:** English and Kiswahili are the official languages; numerous indigenous languages are also spoken.
- **Ethnic groups:** Kikuyu 22%, Luhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6%, Meru 6%, other African 15%, non-African (Asian, European, and Arab) 1%
- **Location:** Kenya straddles the equator on the eastern coast of Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania.
- **Geography:** Kenya has an impressively varied landscape. Lake Victoria is on the southwestern border of the country, with Tanzania to the south. The other features of Kenya range from a flat, bush-covered plain in the northeast to beautiful Indian Ocean beaches, scenic highlands, lakes, the Great Rift Valley, and the towering Mount Kenya.
- **Population:** 45,925,301 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Christian 82.5%, Muslim 11.1%, Traditionalists 1.6%, other 1.7%, none 2.4%, unspecified 0.7%
- **Time zone:** Kenya is on East Africa Time, eight hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 2pm in Nairobi.

### National Holidays: Kenya

In addition to the holidays listed below, Kenya celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and

Eid al-Fitr. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www](#).

### Historical Overview of Kenya

Some of the earliest humans roamed the land now known as Kenya. Since those primordial times, groups of people from all over Africa and the Middle East have migrated through or into the area. As long as a millennium ago, the Swahili language, which blends Arabic with African Bantu speech, had developed as a common tongue in this region. The aristocratic Hima moved in prior to A.D. 1000, establishing large kingdoms and introducing cattle herding. Bantu peoples followed, including the Kikuyu, who remain the largest single group today.

Arabs sailed south from the Middle East to become a dominant presence in the coastal region as early as the 11th century A.D. In Arabic the country was called the land of the Zenj, or “black people.” For centuries, the coastal area was divided up into city-states known as the “Zenj states.” Mombasa, one of Kenya’s major cities today, originated as one of these city-states.

The first Europeans to have an impact on East Africa were the Portuguese, who arrived by sea in the 15th century and dominated the coastal region for a time. In 1729, the Arabs regained control from the Portuguese and ruled until Kenya came under British influence. During all of this time, Arabs and Africans conducted a slave trade whose effects extended far inland. By the latter half of the 19th century, Britain had become the dominant power, drawing the borders of the newly defined nation of Kenya. The British ended the slave trade, but claimed all land outside defined tribal areas as crown land available for white settlement.

Decades of colonial rule bred resentment among native Africans. In the 1950s, Kikuyus played a prominent role in the Mau Mau rebellion, which was one act in the drama that culminated in independence in 1963. Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of independent Kenya, was a Kikuyu. Though he had been involved in the Mau Mau rebellion, he established moderate, pro-Western policies and was acknowledged as Mzee, “the wise old one,” by his own people and many world leaders upon his death in 1978. Kenyatta’s successor, Daniel arap Moi, continued to follow the moderate social and economic policies that kept Kenya relatively peaceful in the first decades after independence.

But Moi’s years in power were not without controversy and conflict, especially in regards to his personal finances and authoritarian politics. It is rumored that during his time in office, Moi amassed such a large fortune that he may still be the richest man in Africa. In 1991, he submitted to international pressure to allow the formation of other political parties, but still won the 1992 election. International observers noted that the movement to create more parties relied heavily on support that cut across tribal divisions; in contrast, Moi’s political machine emphasized and played on tribal rivalries, resulting in mass evictions of the Kiyuku and oppressive measures against other groups. Eventually the strategy backfired, and in 2002, Moi’s chosen successor was defeated. Today’s Kenya is still marked by tribal differences and rivalry but with the end of Moi era, it’s slowly making its way towards a more promising future.

## Tanzania

### Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 365,755 square miles
- **Capital:** Dodoma
- **Languages:** Swahili is the official language; English and tribal languages are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Mainland – African 99% (of which 95% are Bantu consisting of more than 130 tribes), other 1% (consisting of Asian, European, and Arab); Zanzibar – Arab, African, mixed Arab and African

- **Location:** Tanzania is bordered by Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia
- **Geography:** Mainland Tanzania’s landscape is flat and low along the coast. In the interior, a plateau at an average altitude of about 4,000 feet makes up most of the country, and isolated mountain groups rise in the northeast and southwest.
- **Population:** 51,045,882 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Mainland – Christian 61.4%, Muslim 35.2%, folk religion 1.8%, other 0.2%, unaffiliated 1.4%; Zanzibar—majority Muslim
- **Time Zone:** Tanzania is on Eastern Africa Time, eight hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 2pm in Dar es Salaam.

### National Holidays: Tanzania

In addition to the holidays listed below, Tanzania celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Eid el Fitri. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit

**[www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays)**.

01/01 New Year’s Day

01/12 Zanzibar Revolution Day

04/26 Union Day

05/01 Worker’s Day

06/07 Saba Saba

08/08 Peasants’ Day

10/14 Mwalimu Nyerere Day

12/09 Republic Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

### Historical Overview of Tanzania

Tanzania is home to the Olduvai Gorge, the site where some of the earliest human remains on earth have been discovered. For hundreds of thousands of years, hunter-gatherer societies inhabited the area, though details about them are lost in the mists of time. More recently, the interior of the country has been occupied by pastoral and agricultural societies.

The cattle-herding Maasai are notable among these. They are known to have settled as far south as Dodoma by the early 19th century, and they live around Tanzania’s game parks to this day. In the past, this tribe’s reputation as fierce warriors kept away neighboring tribes and Arab traders, and neither the slave trade nor tribal warfare had much impact in their territory. Today, many Maasai proudly continue their traditional way of life with few inroads from modern civilization, especially in the northern part of the country.

Over one thousand years ago, sea-borne traders established a strong Arab presence on Tanzania’s Indian Ocean coast, which includes the island of Zanzibar. Sultans of Oman ruled Zanzibar by the 18th century, and in 1832 Sultan Seyyid Said located his capital city there. Because of this history, Islam continues to be the dominant religion on Zanzibar today.

Rivalry among European colonial powers brought historic change to the area in the 19th century. Livingston and Stanley were among the first Englishmen to arrive in the interior, where Stanley's famous "Dr. Livingston, I presume" was uttered at Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika. The British made Zanzibar their protectorate in 1890. On the mainland, however, Britain yielded to Germany after German explorer Carl Peters laid the groundwork for colonial exploitation of the country by the German East Africa Company. The two countries signed an agreement giving the Germans what was then known as Tanganyika, while Britain got Kenya and Uganda. World War I, during which Germany and Britain fought intense land and naval battles in Tanganyika, ended this arrangement. Following Germany's defeat in Europe, Britain was put in charge of the League of Nations mandate for Tanganyika.

In the 20th century, the movement to end colonialism in Tanganyika took shape among farmers' unions and cooperatives. Julius Nyerere led the political party that grew out of this movement, and became the country's first president when it made a peaceful transition to independence in 1961. The island of Zanzibar gained independence in 1963, in a transition that involved a bloody revolution during which the bulk of the Arab population was expelled. In 1964, Tanganyika, Zanzibar, and Pemba (another offshore island) joined to become the United Republic of Tanzania.

Tanzania's leaders stood at the forefront of African liberation movements during the 1970s and the early 1980s. They allowed Mozambique nationalists to use Tanzanian territory for training and attack bases as they fought for independence from the Portuguese. In 1979, Tanzanian troops helped overthrow the regime of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. President Nyerere also played a key role in the negotiations for ending white rule in Zimbabwe. Although it maintained good relations with the West, Tanzania followed a strongly socialist path in the decades immediately following independence.

In November 1985, Nyerere retired and was succeeded in the presidency by Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Nyerere continued as the chairman of the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania until August 1990. Tanzania began moving toward a multiparty system in the early 1990s; in 1992 a new constitutional rule allowed for the formation of other parties provided they were active in both Tanganyika (the mainland) and Zanzibar. The ruling was meant to address the growing concerns of the Zanzibari who felt that unification had relegated the island to second-place status in comparison with the mainland. But when the first multi-party elections took place in 1995, there were sharp divisions between the island and the mainland; these divisions would crop up periodically throughout the following decades.

A key example of this divide occurred shortly after the highly contested 2000 general elections, which were won by a party with strong support on the mainland, the CCM. Not long after the election, the offices of the Zanzibar-based opposition party—the CUF—were raided by the police and the CUF chairman was charged with unlawful assembly. Supporters took to the streets in protest, which sadly disintegrated into a violent clash with the police. Ultimately the heads of both parties joined together to restore calm, but the incident prompted many in Tanzania to call for a greater level of freedom for opposition parties.



In addition to political struggles, the residents of Zanzibar have also struggled with their dependence on the mainland for electricity, which is supplied by an underwater cable. In 2008 the cable's connection failed, leaving the island without electricity for roughly one month. (Many in Zanzibar have backup generators for this very reason.) But these internal squabbles are relatively mild, especially compared to other African nations. In recent years the relative stability has helped Tanzania emerge as one of the anchors for the East African region, accepting refugees from the conflicts in Rwanda, hosting peace talks for Burundi, and forming an East African trade alliance with neighboring states like Kenya.

## Namibia

### Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 318,261 square miles
- **Capital:** Windhoek
- **Languages:** English is the official language of Namibia; Afrikaans (common language of most of the population), German, and indigenous languages are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Black 87.5%, white 6%, mixed 6.5%; about 50% of the population belong to the Ovambo tribe and 9% to the Kavangos tribe; other ethnic groups include Herero 7%, Damara 7%, Nama 5%, Caprivian 4%, Bushmen 3%, Baster 2%, Tswana 0.5%
- **Location:** Namibia is bordered by South Africa, Zimbabwe, and the Atlantic Ocean.
- **Geography:** With scant exception (in the north near Angola and in the thin Caprivi Strip), rainfall is rare and lakes or ponds are few. Two deserts blanket its land with sand: the Namib, possibly the oldest in the world, follows the entire Skeleton Coast and stretches 60 to 100 miles inland; and the Kalahari comprises almost the entire eastern part of the country. Central Namibia (a high, rocky escarpment that soars more than 6,500 feet above sea level) sees a mere six inches of rain per year.
- **Population:** 2,212,307
- **Religions:** Christian 80% to 90% (Lutheran 50% at least), indigenous beliefs 10% to 20%
- **Time Zone:** Namibia is on West Africa Time, seven hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington, D.C., it is 1pm in Windhoek.

## National Holidays: Namibia

In addition to the holidays listed below, Namibia celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Ascension Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/01 New Year's Day

03/21 Independence Day

05/01 May Day

05/04 Cassinga Day

05/25 Africa Day

08/26 Heroes' Day

12/10 International Human Rights Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Day of Goodwill

## Historical Overview of Namibia

The San were the earliest people to inhabit southern Africa. These nomadic hunter-gatherers were hardy and could quickly adapt to the region's severe terrain and climate. DNA evidence suggests that the San—sometimes referred to as “Bushmen”—were in fact the oldest people in the world, and southern Africa was their Eden. If so, then we can all trace our genes to them.

In the third or fourth century B.C., the first Bantus arrived on south-central Namibia's plateaus. They brought the first tribal structure to the region and drove other tribes into the desert or the swamps of the Okavango Delta. Tribes that did not retreat were taken on as slaves to the Bantu.

Around the fifth century, A.D., tribal Khoi-Khoi groups came into the region from Botswana, settling here to raise livestock. Over time, they displaced the San and ruled Namibia until the 16th century. Archaeological records suggest that the Khoi-Khoi were among the first pottery makers. Descendants of all these tribes remain in Namibia today, but most have been assimilated into modern society.

Namibia's barren and inhospitable coastline largely turned away European explorers. But the late 15th century saw Portuguese mariners landing on its shores, merely to erect stone crosses along the beaches that could be used to guide navigation. Not until the late 1800s did Namibia become the object of imperial affections, when Germany annexed it. The enclave of Walvis Bay, however, was ignored by Germany, but taken by the British in 1878 for the Cape Colony.

In 1904, the Herero people—part of the Bantu tribe—rose up against German colonists. But their uprising was brutally quelled, and 60,000 Hereros were killed. Meanwhile, just east of Lüderitz in the southern Namib Desert, diamonds were discovered. German authorities, anxious to keep the locals out, quickly labeled the region a sperrgebiet, or “forbidden area,” and they set to mining.

After World War I, the League of Nations mandated that South Africa rule what had become known as South-West Africa. After World War II, the mandate stood, but the UN didn't go so far as to grant South Africa annexation. Still, the South African government granted Namibian whites representation in their parliament in 1949. As a result, Namibia's farmland was doled out to white settlers, and black workers were legally relegated as "reserves."

Nationalism rose during the following decade, giving birth to the militaristic South West Africa People's Organization (Swapo). A war for independence ignited. Still, Swapo pursued a more peaceful avenue when they presented their case against South African occupation to the International Court of Justice in 1966. Despite an inconclusive outcome, the UN General Assembly terminated the mandate of 50 years ago and got to work administering the region with the creation of the Council for South West Africa. But the council failed to create any internal government, so South Africa easily inserted itself, refusing to officially let go of Namibia unless Cuban troops left Angola, which borders Namibia to the north. As a response, Swapo stepped up guerrilla activities.

It wasn't until 20 years later that a resolution was brokered in the form of a 1988 UN-sponsored deal that ensured Cuban troops would leave Angola if South African troops withdrew from Namibia. With all that said and done, Swapo won the 1989 elections, a constitution was created, and independence began under the presidency of Swapo leader Sam Nujoma. Walvis Bay was ceded by the British in 1994 after the end of apartheid in South Africa.

But peace would be short-lived. In 1999, Namibia welcomed Angolan troops onto its soil so they could attack UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) from a more strategic position. Namibia was once again embroiled in conflict, even if as its own nation.

By far the one of the biggest controversies in recent times of Namibia has been the issue of land reform. At first, Namibia's President Nujoma took a more conciliatory approach than his colleague Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe. While the latter took forcible possession of white farms, Nujoma condemned illegal land seizures and created a "willing seller, willing buyer" approach that was designed to allow for the peaceful redistribution of land from white farmers to black farmhands. By 2003, he had averted 15 farm invasions and played a role in a crucial agreement between a black farmhands' union and white farmers. But with the 2004 election Hifikepunye Pohamba (who had previously been the Minister of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation) came a more authoritarian approach; it became compulsory that white farmers turn over their land in exchange for a payout from the government. President Pohamba was re-elected in 2009 with over 70% of the popular vote; his term will expire in 2015.

## Botswana

### Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 224,607 square miles
- **Capital:** Gaborone
- **Languages:** English (official), Setswana (Tswana)

- **Ethnicity:** Tswana (or Setswana) 79%, Kalanga 11%, Basarwa 3%, other, including Kgalagadi and white 7%
- **Location:** Botswana is bordered by Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Namibia.
- **Geography:** Botswana is a landlocked republic in southern Africa covering an area slightly smaller than France. Bordering nations include Zimbabwe in the northeast, South Africa in the south and southeast, and Namibia to the north and west. The country is geologically a vast sandy tableland with an average elevation of about 3,300 feet (1,000 meters). Large tracts of land in the central south and west (about two-thirds of the country) are covered by the Kalahari Desert. In the north-central portion of Botswana lie the wetlands of the Okavango Delta, the world's largest inland delta, and the salt pans of the Makgadikgadi area.
- **Population:** 2,182,719
- **Religions:** Christian 71.6%, Badimo 6%, other 1.4% (includes Baha'i, Hindu, Muslim), unspecified 0.4%, none 20.6%
- **Time Zone:** Botswana is 7 hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 1pm in Botswana.

### National Holidays: Botswana

In addition to the holidays listed below, Botswana celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Ascension Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/01 New Year's Day

05/01 May Day

07/01 Sir Seretse Khama Day

07/20 President's Day

09/30 Botswana Day

12/25 Christmas Day

### Historical Overview of Botswana

The earliest known inhabitants of what is now Botswana were the San, or Bushmen, who continue to wander the Kalahari Desert today. Their origins are unknown, but they are estimated to have lived here for some 30,000 years. The San were followed by the Khoi-Khoi, or Hottentots; and then came the Bantu tribes, who migrated from the northwestern and eastern regions of Africa, probably around the first or second century AD. In the centuries that followed, southern African tribes like the Basotho made incursions into Botswana, and there was much fragmentation (mostly peaceful) among the tribes until the end of the 18th century.

By 1652, Europeans had arrived on the Cape and had begun their inexorable spread northwards. By 1817, Botswana had its first English Christian mission. But the face of Botswana was more significantly altered with the unification of the Zulu tribes under the fierce warlord Shaka, in 1818 (in what is now South Africa). His military machine conquered or destroyed all tribes in his path; by 1830, many tribes in southern and eastern Botswana had either fallen or been absorbed into the Shaka Zulu Empire.

Meanwhile, as the European missions and settlements grew, the Dutch Boers and British colonists began their own partitions of southern Africa, basically taking advantage of the shifting alliances between fragmented tribes. Tension between the British and the Boers finally erupted in war in 1887. Its geopolitical result was the withdrawal of Britain from the Transvaal in exchange for Boer allegiance to the British Crown. But the Boers continued to push into Tswana territory in the north, in what was then called Bechuanaland (and later to become Botswana).

The Tswana people lobbied for British protection, and in 1885, their territory became the Bechuanaland Protectorate, administered by Britain. Britain's interest in the Bechuana colony was scant until Cecil Rhodes and his British South African Company began trying to wrest control of it. A delegation of three powerful Tswana chiefs, with backing from Christian missionaries, appealed to London for more direct government control in an effort to stop Rhodes. The government agreed, consolidated administration of its southern African colonies, and thereby aggravated the simmering tensions with the Boers. War again erupted in 1899.

After the Boer War ended in 1902, the Union of South Africa was established with provisions for the incorporation of Bechuanaland. Self-rule advanced within Botswana when advisory councils of African and European residents were set up in 1920. A parliamentary government consisting of the National Assembly and the advisory House of Chiefs and headed by a president was instituted in 1965. Complete independence as a republic came on Sept. 30, 1966. Despite these political developments, Botswana remained among the poorest of nations. Then, in 1967, diamonds were discovered, and the entire economic base of Botswana changed overnight. Botswana now has one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

For next few decades, Botswana's history became defined by its relationship with other southern African nations. In the 1970s, the relationship was one of contrast—Botswana was seen as a more liberal, more open country than its neighbors. With a growing economy and no apartheid regime, Botswana was particularly attractive to South African refugees, anti-apartheid activists, and to those fleeing the Civil War in Zimbabwe. (Today Botswana is still one of the few African nations to specifically guarantee freedom of speech, press, and religion in its constitution.)

A shift in the political landscape brought about movement towards unity rather than contrast. In 1980 the Southern African Development Coordination Conference was founded with the express purpose of creating a unified economy in southern Africa. In time this organization became today's Southern African Development Community, which continues to champion the cause of a more united Africa. Sadly, the country's biggest crisis to date is one that does unite much of Africa—the AIDS epidemic. But in keeping with their history of openness, Botswana's National Health Council has been working hard against the epidemic in ways unheard of in most other African countries: with increased spending, open and frank communications about AIDS transmission, and by working with the government to ensure antiretroviral drugs reach the infected. The success of these measures has made modern Botswana an example for other countries facing a similar crisis.

# Zimbabwe

## Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 150,872 square miles
- **Capital:** Harare
- **Languages:** English is the official language; Shona and Nguni are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** African 99.4% (predominantly Shona; Ndebele is the second largest ethnic group), other 0.4%, unspecified 0.2%
- **Location:** Zimbabwe is bordered by Zambia, Mozambique, South Africa, and Botswana.
- **Geography:** Zimbabwe is twice as large as Great Britain. Its Victoria Falls, approximately one mile long with a maximum drop of 420 feet, is located on the Zambezi River by the Zambia-Zimbabwe border.
- **Population:** 14,229,541
- **Religions:** Protestant 75.9% (includes Apostolic 38%, Pentecostal 21.1%, other 16.8%), Roman Catholic 8.4%, other Christian 8.4%, other 1.2% (includes traditional, Muslim), none 6.1%
- **Time Zone:** Zimbabwe is on Central Africa Time, seven hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 1pm in Harare.

## National Holidays: Zimbabwe

In addition to the holidays listed below, Zimbabwe celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Heroes' Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/01 New Year's Day

02/21 National Youth Day

04/18 Independence Day

05/01 Workers Day

05/25 Africa Day

12/22 Unity Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

## Historical Overview of Zimbabwe

The name "Zimbabwe" comes from the capital city of the Monomotapa Empire, whose heyday occurred between the 5th and 15th centuries in this part of Africa. A remnant of this empire survives today at the Great Zimbabwe ruins, about 110 miles south of Harare, where there is an acropolis atop a 200-foot-high granite hill and a great enclosure in the plains below. The fortified acropolis housed the priests of the Mwari Cult. In the great enclosure, traders exchanged local gold and ivory for porcelain, glass beads, and other luxuries from overseas markets. Evidence shows that trade was brisk with lands as far away as India and China.

By the late 19th century, the area was occupied by African tribes including the Ndebele and the Shona, led by the powerful chief Lobengula. In 1890, a British column led by Cecil Rhodes marched from South Africa in search of precious minerals. They established Fort Salisbury (now Harare) and disbanded. Through treaties and persuasion, Rhodes and his British South Africa Company acquired mineral rights in Lobengula's kingdom.

Rhodes claimed the territory north of the Limpopo River for Great Britain and distributed it among his pioneers and the indigenous Africans. The country was known as Rhodesia for many years in his honor. The northern portion is now Zambia, while the former Southern Rhodesia was renamed Zimbabwe in 1980 in honor of its historical and cultural heritage.

The Ndebele took up arms in 1893 and again in 1896. European settlers spread from the area around Fort Salisbury, and by 1897 the railway had reached from South Africa to Bulawayo, the capital of Lobengula's former kingdom. A few years later the line was extended to reach the coalfields of Hwange, the copper belt in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), and Salisbury, which was already linked by rail to the port of Beira in Portuguese Mozambique.

Southern Rhodesia was granted independence by the British in 1923 as an autonomous member of the Commonwealth, but the passage of the Land Apportionment Act in 1931 solidified political power in the hands of the white minority. In 1953 Southern Rhodesia was joined with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Malawi) into the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Vigorous opposition by nationalists in Zambia and Malawi led to the dissolution of the federation in 1963 and to independence for Zambia and Malawi in 1964. In 1965, Rhodesia's prime minister, Ian Smith, announced a unilateral declaration of independence.

During the 1960s and 1970s, nationalism was building in Rhodesia under the parties led by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe. Both groups had to take refuge in neighboring independent countries. From there they waged a seven-year struggle for liberation from white minority rule. At last an agreement was reached to hold a popular election in 1980. Mugabe won a landslide victory to become Zimbabwe's first prime minister under majority rule, and continues to hold office today.

The parliament passed a Land Acquisition Bill in 1992, allowing the government to redistribute about half the land owned by white commercial farmers to black peasants. In his successful 1996 re-election campaign, Mugabe made a pledge that drew a large measure of concern from Zimbabwe's 100,000 remaining whites, promising to do more to speed up the resettlement of poor blacks on land acquired by the government. But there has been concern and controversy among the black population as well, with Mugabe's recent years being marred by scandals, charges of corruption, economic problems, and even outcries about his choice of wives.

After 28 years of what had effectively become a one-party state, some opposition parties began to challenge the status quo. In Zimbabwe's 2008 elections, for instance, the leader of the country's opposition party, Morgan Tsvangirai, won the popular vote, but Mugabe refused to step down from power quietly. He strong-armed opposition supporters and insisted on a run-off election, despite widespread condemnation from world leaders. In the end, South Africa's president Thabo Mbeki brokered a power-sharing agreement in which Mugabe retained the presidency, with Tsvangirai serving as prime minister.

## RESOURCES

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### Suggested Readings

#### General Africa

*Africa, A Biography of the Continent* by John Reader (History): A great introduction to Africa from its ancient cultures up to modern times.

*Faces of Africa, Thirty Years of Photography* OR *Passages: Photographs in Africa* by Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher (Photography/Anthropology) Traveling throughout Africa from the Sahara to Cape Horn, Beckwith and Fisher have produced decades of striking images.

*Safari: A Chronicle of Adventure* by Bartle Bull (History) In fascinating and often amusing detail, Bull delineates the evolution of the African safari—from the first European expedition in ox-driven wagons to the modern-day version in comfortable camps.

#### Eastern Africa: Kenya & Tanzania

*Love, Life, and Elephants: An African Love Story* by Daphne Sheldrick (Memoir) The lively and engaging biography of a much-admired expert on African elephants—and the first person to raise one in captivity from birth. The book recounts her experiences helping her husband to create and run one of Kenya's national parks and her role in raising orphaned elephants to release back into the wild.

*Crazy River: Exploration and Folly in East Africa* by Richard Grant (Travel Narrative) Author Grant risks his life to travel the relatively unexplored Malagarasi River from Tanzania into Burundi, which he then follows up with a jaunt into Rwanda. At times adventurous, scary, and crazy.

*Serengeti: A Scientist in Paradise* by Anthony Sinclair (Ecology/Memoir) Professor Sinclair first came to study zoology in the Serengeti in the 1960s, and he still works there today. This book combines his scientific knowledge, history of the national park, and lively anecdotes about life as a field researcher.

*It's Our Turn to Eat: The Story of a Kenyan Whistle-Blower* by Michela Wrong (History/Politics) Journalist-turned-author Michela Wrong uses the dramatic true story of anti-corruption officer John Githongo as a way to shed light on tribal politics and corruption in Kenya.

*North of South* by Shiva Naipaul (Travel Narrative) In the 1970s Naipaul traveled to Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia. Through his travels, he tried to discover what the liberation and revolution movements of the time meant to the ordinary people of Africa. A sharp book that offers insights into how Africa was changing at the time.

*Out of Africa* by Isak Dinesen (Biography/Memoir) The classic tale of a young woman who gives up her life in Denmark to run a coffee plantation in Kenya around the time of WWI. Her lyrical descriptions and love for the land and people have made this book an international favorite.



*Serengeti: Natural Order on the African Plain* by Mitsiako Iwago (Natural History) A stunning collection of nearly 300 photographs that capture the daily dramas of life and death in the Serengeti.

*The Gunny Sack* by Moyez G. Vassanji (Fiction) A sweeping novel that focuses on Asian experiences in East Africa. Generations of Asians from Tanzania, Zanzibar, Kenya, and Uganda offer views and perspectives on the past and the future.

*Through a Window, My Thirty Years with the Chimpanzees of Gombe* by Jane Goodall (Natural History). The title says it all—30 years' worth of fieldwork, observations, and conservation activism. Other titles are available by the same author, who is recognized worldwide as the authority on chimpanzees.

*The Snows of Kilimanjaro* by Ernest Hemingway (Short Stories). Regarded as one of Hemingway's most mature works, this story deals with man's fear of death and emotional aloneness.

*West with the Night* by Beryl Markham (Biography/Memoir) A childhood in Kenya and a career as a bush pilot during the 1930s—what more could a girl want? The author's stylish prose evokes her free and adventure-loving spirit.

*Wild Heart of Africa: The Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania* by Rolf D Baldus (sometimes available under just *Wild Heart of Africa* or just *Selous Game Reserve*). The book was a limited printing, so it can be difficult to find or expensive. However, the author is considered a world-class expert on the Selous Reserve.

## **Namibia**

*Burning Shore* by Wilbur Smith (Fiction) One of a series of highly enjoyable novels from Zambian-born writer Wilbur Smith, this romantic adventure tale is partially set on Namibia's Skeleton Coast. The story follows a shipwrecked French widow's love affair with an Afrikaner outlaw in the Namibian desert. Highly recommended by O.A.T.'s Trip Experience Leaders.

*Namibia Space* by Julienne du Toit (Nature/Culture) A collection of photographs and essays highlighting Namibia's landscapes, wildlife, and culture.

*Sands of Silence, On Safari in Namibia* by Peter Hathaway Capstick (Memoir) The first-person story of a hunter on safari in Namibia during the 1980s. The author's defense of big game hunting may be seen as controversial, but his descriptions of the Bushman have been lauded for their accuracy and sensitivity. This book may not be in stock at your local store but can still be found online.

*Soul of a Lion: One Woman's Quest to Rescue Africa's Wildlife Refugees* by Barbara Bennett (Memoir/Animals) A tribute to Mariete van der Merwe, who runs a unique sanctuary for animals and specializes in helping disabled animals. Recounts the sanctuary's creation and daily life with vigor.

*The Second Coming of Mavala Shikongo* by Peter Orner (Fiction) A fascinating novel about the relationship between a beautiful and enigmatic local woman and an American volunteer teacher, set in a school on the edge of Namibia's vast desert.

## **Botswana**

*Botswana Safari Companion* by Alain Pons (Nature/Photography) A colorful illustrated guide to wildlife, photographic opportunities, and travel. There are beautiful photographs on every page, each accompanied by a caption with photography tips for travelers looking to get the most out of their cameras on safari.

*Okavango, A Journey* by Adrian Bailey and Robin Keene-Young (Nature/Photography) A lovely photographic journey through the wildlife of the Okavango Delta

*Whatever You Do, Don't Run: Confessions of a Botswana Safari Guide* by Peter Allison (Travel Narrative) Reflections of many years of wildlife encounters in the Okavango Delta and other African destinations from a conservationist and safari guide.

*The Number 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* by Alexander McCall Smith (Mystery) The first of a popular series featuring the resourceful detective, Precious Ramotswe. The novel evokes the cultures, customs and diverse landscapes of Botswana—including Botswana's tremendous national pride.

## **Zimbabwe**

*When a Crocodile Eats the Sun: A Memoir of Africa* by Peter Godwin (Memoir) A deeply moving account of growing up in Zimbabwe, the impact of the civil war, and his father's death (which reveals some family secrets) by veteran journalist Peter Godwin.

*Harvest of Thorns* by Shimmer Chinodya (History) A powerful and personal account of the Rhodesia Bush War.

*The Girl Who Married a Lion and Other Tales of Africa* by Alexander McCall Smith (Short Stories) Brings together a collection of often hilarious, often bizarre, folktales that the author heard as a child growing up in Zimbabwe. Also includes seven new tales from Botswana.

*The Grass is Singing* by Doris Lessing (Fiction) Lessing's first novel, the story of a white farm wife in Zimbabwe, and her relationship with her African servant. An explosive topic for the times, the book is a thoughtful portrait of the country, its people and social challenges

*The Last Resort: A Memoir of Mischief and Mayhem on a Family Farm in Africa* by Douglas Rogers (Memoir) A critically-acclaimed tale about the author's family's last-ditch effort to save their farm from a government ordinance re-claiming land owned by white farmers. Touching, and at times darkly funny.

## **Suggested Movies**

### **Kenya**

*Born Free* (1986, Drama) The true-life story of a rescued lion named Elsa and the family who helped save her. Shot on location in Kenya.

*Nowhere in Africa* (2001, Drama) A Jewish couple flee Germany for Kenya at the start of WWII and try to build a new life in a strange land. In German, with subtitles.

*Out of Africa* (1985, Drama/Romance) A young Danish woman falls for Kenya, her new coffee plantation, and a restless big-game hunter in 1910s. Based on the book by the same name.

*The First Grader* (2010, Biopic/Drama) An 84-year old Kenyan villager is determined to learn how to read and write no matter the odds. An uplifting movie based on a true story.

## **Tanzania**

*The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (1952, Classic) While Hemingway didn't like it much, viewers admired this interpretation of a dying writer reflecting on his life in the shadow of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

## **Botswana**

*The Number 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* (2008, Mystery) A film version of the popular book. After the death of her father, Precious Ramotswe sets out to become the first female private detective in all of Botswana. But will anyone hire her?

## Useful Websites

**Overseas Adventure Travel Forum** (tips from previous travelers)  
[www.oattravel.com/forum](http://www.oattravel.com/forum)

**Overseas Adventure Travel Store**  
[www.oatshop.com](http://www.oatshop.com)

**Overseas Adventure Travel Frequent Asked Questions**  
[www.oattravel.com/faq](http://www.oattravel.com/faq)

**International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)**  
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

**Electricity & Plugs**  
[www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets](http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets)

**Foreign Exchange Rates**  
[www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter)  
[www.oanda.com/converter/classic](http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic)

**ATM Locators**  
[www.mastercard.com/atm](http://www.mastercard.com/atm)  
[www.visa.com/atmlocator](http://www.visa.com/atmlocator)

**World Weather**  
[www.intellicast.com](http://www.intellicast.com)  
[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)  
[www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

**Basic Travel Phrases** (80 languages)  
[www.travlang.com/languages](http://www.travlang.com/languages)

**Packing Tips**  
[www.travelite.org](http://www.travelite.org)

**U.S. Customs & Border Protection**  
[www.cbp.gov/travel](http://www.cbp.gov/travel)

**Transportation Security Administration (TSA)**  
[www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)

**National Passport Information Center**  
[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

**Holidays Worldwide**  
[www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays)