

Essential Information for BOTSWANA & ZIMBABWE - provided by the wholesaler & added to by Peter Craig

VISA REQUIREMENTS:

The information provided is based on Australian passport holders. Our information is correct at time of printing, but we take no responsibility for any changes by the Governments. We therefore recommend that clients carry extra US\$ cash in case of such events. All visitors must hold onward tickets, documents and sufficient funds for duration of travel.

PASSPORT VALIDITY You will require a valid acceptable passport or travel document good for a sufficient period to cover your intended stay (at least 6 months), a valid visa if required, sufficient funds, a return or onward ticket and at least two blank pages for each visiting country.

ZIMBABWE: US\$30 cash at point of entry (valid for 30 days)

- Passport valid for a least 6 months from your date of entry.
- Return ticket to your country (or enough money to buy one)
- Sufficient funds to cover your stay in Zimbabwe
- Enough blank pages in your passport to fit the required entry visa.

SOUTH AFRICA (even though we are in transit):

South Africa tightened up on its documentation for children travelling to South Africa or in transit through South Africa in 2015 (to prevent illegal migration since South Africa is an economic destination for its poorer neighbours).

The Head of College, Mrs. Ethell, is able to sign a **Principal's Consent Affidavit** that covers everything that the South African Government requires.

However, with my experience of travelling in Africa, what High Commissions say and what officials at the point of entry require are often different. If there are any difficulties with the Principal's Consent Affidavit, I would like to be able to produce the following documentation:

- **A letter from a parent(s)** giving permission for the student to travel with the Oxley College group, headed by Mr. Peter Craig, Mrs. Emma Calver and Mr. Stephen Marnoch, through South Africa to Zimbabwe and Botswana. **(you will be provided, during the term, with a proforma by the Oxley staff to sign)**
- A scanned or photo copy of both parents' passport photo page.

HEALTH ISSUES

- **YELLOW FEVER POLICY – this is not required** for Australians flying directly into Botswana & Zimbabwe
- Please consult your doctor before you travel to Africa for advice on precautions against
 - malaria prior to your departure.
 - hepatitis, typhoid and tetanus

SPENDING MONEY

- It is recommended that you travel with foreign cash (preferably in **small denomination bills of US dollars**). Most places will **NOT** accept any US dollars printed prior to 2006 or in poor condition. **A Travelex Cash Card**, purchased at the Post Office, is an ideal debit card as it can be topped up online from home by parents and a duplicate is issued at the same time (which can be carried by Mr. Craig as an emergency in case the other is lost)
- Money and Banking hours: Banks and foreign exchange bureaux are available at all international airports and in all main towns. Most hotels and lodges accept Visa and MasterCard. Students will have access to ATMs in Victoria Falls (not always reliable) and Kasane and Maun (reliable)

****Surcharges could apply on credit cards****

ZIMBABWE: The currency in general use in Victoria Falls is the US\$.

BOTSWANA: The currency is the Pula (P) but US dollars cash are widely accepted. General banking hours in Maun and Kasane: Monday – Friday 08.30 – 14.30, Saturday 08.15 – 10.45

SOUTH AFRICA (O.R. TAMBO International Airport). The South African currency is Rand. Money changers will change US\$ or AUD\$ to rand for any purchases.

TIME DIFFERENCE to Australia: Zimbabwe & Botswana – 8 hours

ELECTRICITY:

Campgrounds in the more remote areas do not have electricity. These generally rely on generator power for lighting and refrigeration but this power only runs at critical times of the day. Please be aware that you will not find a plug socket in your tent.

Botswana 230V, 50 Hz. Plugs are of the round 3-pin South African variety.

Dietary requirements:

Most dietary requirements can be catered for but please tell us well in advance so we can inform the tour operators and lodges. With most destinations a shop isn't simply around the corner so lodges need all information well in advance.



It is generally recommended that you drink and brush your teeth with bottled water during your stay in Southern Africa both in the towns and whilst visiting the camps and lodges. Ice at the lodges is made with treated and filtered water. Visitors should buy bottled water at all times (it is cheap)

Border Crossing: ZIMBABWE/BOTSWANA: You are required to show your passport at all border crossings and our Representative/Driver will assist you with the border crossing.

Language: English is widely spoken throughout Southern Africa.

CLIMATE:

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

Game Drives: Game drives are usually twice a day AM & PM between 2-3 hours. There may be long and slow driving conditions due to road surfaces.

What to pack: Dress should generally be informal, comfortable and practical. Washable cotton clothing in neutral colours is best for safari. Light to medium weight khaki trousers or shorts, skirts for women, and t-shirts work well. **A light jacket and warm sweater are recommended during the early morning** and evening game drives. Sandals or sneakers are suitable footwear. Laundry is available at most camps and lodges so avoid bringing too much gear. We advise all clients to pack as little as possible to minimize 'headaches'.

Baggage Restrictions: One average sized suitcase with a luggage limit of 23kgs is allowed on normal scheduled flights in economy class to/from and within Africa.

Tipping: It is customary to tip 10% of the bill at all restaurants. It is also the custom to tip when staying in Game lodges/camps to local rangers/guides, and Game lodge/camp staff of US\$5-\$10 per person per day for each the guide and the staff. Porters are given a tip of R5/US1 per item of luggage, paid directly at the time they provide the service.