


AFRICA
dynamics



SOUTH AFRICA





South Africa has been called “A world in one country”, and there is no better way to describe all that it has to offer. It is undoubtedly one of the most culturally and geographically diverse places on earth.

Fondly known by locals as the 'Rainbow Nation', South Africa has 11 official languages and its multicultural inhabitants are influenced by a fascinating mix of African, Asian, and European cultures. Due to its rich and turbulent history, there are plenty of historical attractions and museums to explore.

There is something for everyone here – cosmopolitan Cape Town with world-class restaurants, art galleries, Table Mountain, Cape of Good Hope, and the nearby beautiful countryside and fine wine in the Cape Winelands; the spectacular scenery of the Garden Route; magnificent whales breaching on the Hermanus Coast; the

sunny beaches of Durban; and fascinating historical and cultural sites including the Zululand battlefields, and sites related to the country's dark past as well as its freedom, including Soweto, Robben Island, and the Apartheid Museum.

Above all else, South Africa's attraction lies in its remarkably untamed wilderness areas with an astonishing range of wildlife roaming freely across massive unfenced game reserves such as the famous Kruger National Park and the large private tracts of unfenced wildlife land bordering the park, as well as the the northern Madikwe and the Cape's Kalahari.

VISA INFORMATION

US and Canadian citizens are not required to obtain a visa for entry to South Africa. A passport valid for a minimum of six months beyond visa issuance and/or date of entry, and at least two consecutive blank visa pages, is required. Please visit www.saembassy.org for a full list of nationalities requiring visas for entry into South Africa.



PROHIBITED GOODS

If you have purchased curios, we recommend keeping the relevant documentation (receipt) to hand when proceeding through arrivals and departures. We also suggest exercising caution when it comes to buying mementos from informal markets - hair bracelets, seashells, loose seeds/pods, feathers, porcupine quills, bone, ivory or horn – as these may be confiscated if considered to be illegal. Please see our pamphlet or visit www.USWTA.org for details.



INSURANCE

Please note that Emergency Medical Evacuation coverage is required, and is not included in your itinerary. As medical services are private and can be expensive, travellers are strongly advised to take out comprehensive travel insurance.

We are happy to provide quotations for MedEvac and / or Full Coverage insurance, including trip cancellation, trip interruption, cancel for any reason, and inclusion of pre-existing conditions. Please ask us for additional details.





STAYING HEALTHY

The information below serves as a guideline only and reference is made to general precautions only. For up to date information on the latest health and vaccination recommendations, please consult with a qualified health professional at least 6 weeks before your intended departure. Well-equipped medical clinics and well-stocked pharmacies are usually close to most major hotels.

VACCINES

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required only if entering from a country where yellow fever is endemic. The Government of South Africa advises, but does not require, an updated TPD (tetanus, polio, diphtheria), Hepatitis A, and Typhoid vaccines. See the CDC's [website](#) for additional information.

COVID-19

Covid-19 testing, protocols, and other related information will be provided separately due to frequent changes.

MALARIA

Malaria is present in many areas of South Africa and anti-malaria medication is recommended. Mosquito repellent should also be used on arms, hands, legs and feet or exposed areas of the body, particularly in the evenings. For more information on Malaria and preventative measures, please consult your doctor and visit the Centre for Disease Control [website](#).

FOOD & WATER

South Africa is renowned for good food, offering quality local and international cuisine. Major cities like Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, offer a wide range of good restaurants that reflect the country's diverse population – with local ingredients introduced with creativity and flair. The Cape winelands are particularly famous for good food. Special dietary requirements, provided known in advance, can usually be accommodated in most restaurants. The country's extensive wine growing areas produce world class wines at very reasonable prices. On safari, the lodges and camps we recommend provide very good and often excellent standards of cuisine where you can enjoy fresh ingredients with peace of mind. We do recommend drinking bottled water. Restaurant recommendations are available on request.


SUNBURN

The African sun is harsh, even during the colder winter months. We recommend that a hat, sunglasses, and high factor sunblock be used.

WEATHER

Normal weather conditions prevailing, the weather in South Africa is mild and pleasant, with warm days and cool nights.

- JNB = Johannesburg
- CPT = Cape Town
- MQP = Kruger Mpumalanga National Park

	Average Temp High / Low	Average Rainfall	Average Temp High / Low	Average Rainfall	Average Temp High / Low	Average Rainfall
	JNB	JNB	CPT	CPT	MQP	MQP
January	86° / 52°	5.1 in.	82° / 60°	0.6 in.	86° / 63°	3.7 in.
February	84° / 51°	3.9 in.	84° / 60°	0.7 in.	81° / 64°	3.7 in.
March	82° / 47°	3.7 in.	80° / 57°	0.9 in.	82° / 63°	2.7 in.
April	78° / 41°	2.2 in.	77° / 53°	1.7 in.	81° / 60°	1.5 in.
May	73° / 35°	0.5 in.	71° / 49°	2.8 in.	77° / 55°	0.6 in.
June	60° / 29°	0.4 in.	67° / 45°	3.8 in.	73° / 46°	0.4 in.
July	70° / 29°	0.2 in.	66° / 43°	3.4 in.	72° / 43°	0.5 in.
August	76° / 31°	0.2 in.	67° / 46°	3.2 in.	79° / 39°	0.4 in.
September	83° / 35°	1.1 in.	69° / 47°	1.7 in.	82° / 45°	1.0 in.
October	85° / 41°	0.3 in.	74° / 51°	0.1 in.	86° / 52°	1.7 in.
November	85° / 45°	0.5 in.	76° / 55°	0.0 in.	86° / 57°	2.6 in.
December	86° / 49°	4.2 in.	80° / 59°	0.7 in.	86° / 63°	3.7 in.



SEASONALITY

Despite regional differences, the weather in South Africa is generally pleasant throughout the year – warm to hot days, and cool to warm nights.

During the winter months however (May to September), it can get very cold at night and in the early morning, particularly when on safari, so we would like to suggest that you pack accordingly – very warm clothing including an anorak/winter jacket, a beanie (wool hat), scarf and gloves are recommended. Please also refer to our packing suggestions list.

January to March is the peak of summer and the rainfall season in most of the country. Days are normally warm with afternoon cloud build up and possible showers although these are usually short-lived. Wildlife can disperse during this time in search of new grazing. Since the Western Cape has a Mediterranean climate, with rainfall in the winter months (late May to early September), the Cape can be very warm from January to March. Don't be surprised to experience strong winds periodically from late September to January - the strong south-easterly winds are affectionately referred to by locals as "the Cape doctor".

During April to May morning temperatures start to drop and the evenings are cooler. Rainfall is limited and as the free-standing waters dry out, wildlife start to congregate more at perennial water sources.

The early part of June is very cold in the mornings and evenings, occasionally even dropping below zero, and winter lasts until August. Days are normally sunny and pleasant with occasional cold snaps, and windy spells towards the end of this period. Game viewing can be excellent in the dry winter months. The Cape can experience lovely sunny but cool weather during this period. It is also the rainy season in the Cape so some days can be quite wet and windy.

Spring starts in September with all the vegetation coming into leaf and days are much warmer with the occasional cool evening and morning. From October we experience very warm sunny days with warm evenings. Some rains are experienced sporadically, though larger showers can be expected usually only around December. Wildlife sightings can vary depending how early the rains have started.

Snowfall is limited to the highest mountain peaks, and it is a relatively dry country with a mean annual rainfall of 19.76 inches.

Please also refer to our packing suggestions list.



MONEY

The currency unit in South Africa is the Rand (ZAR), denoted by the symbol R, with 100 Cents making up ZAR 1.00 (one Rand).

For those travelling on safari, it is seldom necessary to change currency as US Dollars are widely accepted for tipping and often, packages are fully inclusive.

Most banks are open Mondays to Fridays 09:00 – 15:30 and Saturdays 08:30 – 11:00. ATMs are found in every large town. Several international banks have branches in the main cities and international airports (CPT and JNB).

USD currency prior to 2016 will not be accepted, nor will damaged or marked notes. Any cash payments made to camps/lodges for curios, or gratuities to guides or staff, need to be in one of these currencies. MasterCard and Visa are usually accepted, while American Express and Debit Cards often are not. USD coins are not accepted anywhere.

TIPPING

Tipping is a way of life on safari, but usually at the discretion of the traveler and should be a reward for good service. Generally speaking, gratuities can be paid in cash (USD or ZAR) or alternatively, depending on the establishment, by credit card. The following is a general guideline for tipping:

- Porterage ZAR 15.00 per guest per movement
- Hotel/Game Lodge Staff ZAR 50.00 per guest per day for staff, i.e. housekeeping, etc.
- Taxi Drivers 5% of the fare
- Restaurants 10% of the bill
- Transfer Driver ZAR 20.00 per guest per movement
- Airport Meet & Greet ZAR 20.00 per guest
- Sightseeing Driver/Guide
 - For half day tours ZAR 60.00 per guest
 - For full day tours ZAR 120.00 per guest
- Safari Guide/Tracker *(Payment in US Dollars preferred)*
 - \$10-\$15 per guest per day for the guide
 - \$5- \$10 per guest per day for the tracker

Tip your wildlife guides in one lump sum, on the day of your departure. Porters and guides who perform a one-off service may be tipped on the spot. If you are staying at a fully inclusive (all meals and activities) lodge or camp, it is customary to tip the general staff on the day of your departure by putting money in the "tip box", or by putting it in an envelope and handing it to the camp manager on the day of departure.



PHOTOGRAPHY

South Africa is a wonderful destination for photography due to its diverse landscapes, vibrant cultures, and variety of animal species. In many quality camps, the guides and staff are wildlife photography enthusiasts. You should always ask before taking photographs of people, particularly local people – and expect to pay a gratuity. Please don't be offended by this; to many Africans, a portrait is a tradable commodity. Your guide will offer advice in each circumstance. Also, do not photograph any government or military building and installations, including soldiers, police and police buildings, post offices, banks, airports, border posts and railway stations.

LANGUAGE & CULTURE

There are 11 officially recognised languages in South Africa – namely English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa, Swati, Tsonga, Southern Sotho, Tswana, Venda, Northern Sotho and Ndebele – most of which are indigenous to the country. English is widely spoken in most hotels and lodges by the service staff. It is the language of government and official documents, commerce, banking and road signs.

The various ethnicities and cultures include Afrikaans, British, 'Coloured', amaNdebele, Basotho, South Asian, amaSwazi, baTsonga, baTswana, vhaVenda, amaXhosa and amaZulu.

LUGGAGE GUIDELINES

In South Africa, allowances for luggage and costs for excess luggage will vary depending on the flight company, aircraft used, and routing – please contact us for further details. Most flights allow a maximum of 20kg / 44lb per person. Keep in mind that if you are traveling to another country, the type of luggage for light aircraft flights, including hand luggage and camera equipment may differ. It is highly recommended that you lock your luggage. It is also advisable that you do NOT pack valuable items in your checked luggage.

ELECTRICITY

All electrical appliances run on 220V. Most outlets are round 3-pin, 15-amp plugs. It is advisable that you carry your own adapters and extra batteries. The primary adapter types are M and N. Various safari camps/lodges may not have 220V (alternating current – AC) and may operate on solar powered 12V electricity (direct current – DC). Please let us know if you will be using a CPAP machine so that we can make arrangements with the camps. Please refer to our Plugs & Adapters document for details.

TIME ZONE

South Africa standard time is GMT + 2 hours.



DRESS CODE

The weather in South Africa varies from hot days to chilly nights, and you should choose your safari wardrobe to allow for easy layering. Ideally, you should plan to wear a lightweight shirt or T-shirt and a pair of shorts or pants during the day, with a jacket or sweater for early morning game drives and cooler evenings. In the winter months of July and August, you should also pack a heavier jacket or thick sweater.

Lightweight, comfortable shoes are recommended – walking, running or tennis shoes are best unless there is serious hiking involved in your itinerary.

A same-day laundry service is available in most hotels, camps and lodges. Dry cleaning is only available in cities.

*Please reference our **packing list** document for detailed information and suggested items.*

SAFETY

As in most cities, common sense while traveling should be used. Visitors should avoid dark, isolated areas after sunset. Unfortunately, petty theft is prevalent in South Africa. Items such as cameras and backpacks / handbags should be secured with a strap, and never left out of your sight. Valuables should be kept in hotel safe-deposit facilities. When walking or riding a bicycle it is advised to look both ways at street crossings, as cars drive on the opposite side of the road. Uber is available at low cost. Only use your hotel, restaurant or concierge to call reliable taxi services. If you are considering car rental and self-driving in South Africa, please reach out to us for special safety precautions and advice.

In the wildlife areas, due to the presence of wild animals, do not walk outside your lodge grounds or camp grounds at any time without a guide or listen carefully to the instructions for safety provided by your guide and safari camp management.

Most of South Africa's popular beaches are beautiful and safe, however we caution visitors against walking alone on beaches after sunset.

Be sure to read and understand your terms and conditions before you travel.



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