

AFRICA
dynamics



BOTSWANA



A photograph of a savanna landscape. In the foreground, three elephants are wading in a watering hole. In the background, a safari vehicle is parked on the grassy bank. The sky is overcast.

Exceptional wildlife, small camps in exclusive wilderness areas, unique activities, and low human footprint combine to make Botswana one of the most memorable safari destinations in Africa.

Botswana is a landlocked country surrounded by Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Your first and most lasting impression will likely be of vast expanses of uninhabited wilderness stretching from horizon to horizon. Here, the sensation of limitless space, rich wildlife and bird viewing, night skies filled with brilliant stars, and sunsets of unearthly beauty, set the scene for your safari. Experience the pristine waters of the world's largest intact inland Delta – the Okavango; the vastness of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve; the isolation and other-worldliness of the Makgadikgadi Pans; and the astoundingly prolific wildlife in the private concessions and parks. Botswana is the last stronghold for a number of endangered

bird and mammal species, making your safari even more memorable. Historically Botswana is one of Africa's success stories. Prior to independence in 1966, it was one of the world's poorest countries, an unexplored land only visited by hardy adventurers. Botswana embarked on developing innovative and eco-friendly tourism practices. The country's leaders took the view that high quality, low volume tourism was the best way to create a sustainable industry that would employ a large percentage of its people while still preserving the environment. It is Botswana's pristine, natural beauty, abundant wildlife and remote wilderness areas that make it a unique and truly exquisite safari destination.

VISA INFORMATION

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

TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN

Parents are now required to provide the following information for all travelling children under the age of 18.

Child and both parents

- An unabridged birth certificate
- A valid passport for the child

Child and one parent, Parent must produce

- An unabridged birth certificate
- A valid passport for the child
- A court order / death certificate / affidavit confirming the absent parent has given permission for the child to travel

Child and guardian, Guardian must produce

- An unabridged birth certificate
- A valid passport for the child
- A court order / death certificate / affidavit confirming the parents have given permission for the child to travel
- Copies of parents / guardian ID documents
- Contact details of parents/guardian

Please see the Embassy of Botswana 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 if entering from a country where yellow fever is endemic. The Government of Botswana advises, but does not require, an updated TPD (tetanus, polio, diphtheria) and a Hepatitis A vaccine. 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

Botswana is a malaria region, 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 visit the Centre for Disease Control website [here](#).

FOOD & WATER

Dining is an integral part of the safari experience. Good standards of cuisine and a large choice of mouth-watering dishes will greet the hungry guest just in from safari. We do not recommend eating any food purchased from roadside cafes, etc., but food served in your lodges and camps is safe to eat.

Regardless of what you hear, we do not recommend that you drink the local tap water. Sterilized drinking water is provided at all lodges, and bottled mineral water is always readily available.

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

The weather in Botswana is generally mild throughout the year – warm to hot days, and cool to warm nights.

Summer (December to March) can be very hot and the evenings also remain fairly warm. It is also the rainy season and cloud coverage and rain can cool things down, although only usually for a short period of time.

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

The in-between periods (April, May and November) – still tend to be dry, however, the days are cooler than in summer and the nights are warmer than in winter.

	Average Temp High / Low	Average Rainfall
January	89° / 66°	4.3 in.
February	87° / 66°	3.2 in.
March	87° / 64°	2.7 in.
April	87° / 57°	1.0 in.
May	82° / 48°	0.1 in.
June	77° / 43°	0.0 in.
July	77° / 42°	0.0 in.
August	82° / 48°	0.0 in.
September	91° / 55°	0.0 in.
October	95° / 61°	1.2 in.
November	93° / 66°	1.9 in.
December	89° / 66°	3.7 in.

Please also refer to our packing suggestions list.

RAINFALL

Botswana, with the exception of the Okavango Delta and the eastern parts of the country, consists almost entirely of the Kalahari Desert and as such, rainfall is low. Total annual rainfall for Maun for example is only 18.5 inches. Phrases like 'rainy season' or 'afternoon thundershowers' need therefore to be seen in context. Rain typically falls in short thundershowers in the late afternoon which produce spectacular dark skies and vivid rainbows before passing.

SEASONALITY

Normal weather conditions prevailing, wildlife viewing in Botswana is good all year round. Each season has its own nuance and special charm – there simply is not one ‘perfect time’ to visit.

Green Season Highlights:

- December to March
- Excellent game concentrations in Central Kalahari
- Time of abundance... births, babies and breeding (and predators)
- Summer bird migrants present in breeding plumage
- Excellent photographic opportunities... great light, colour, and subject matter



Transition Season Highlights

- April, May, November
- Moderate climate with a mix of the green and dry seasons including the dynamics of a change in season



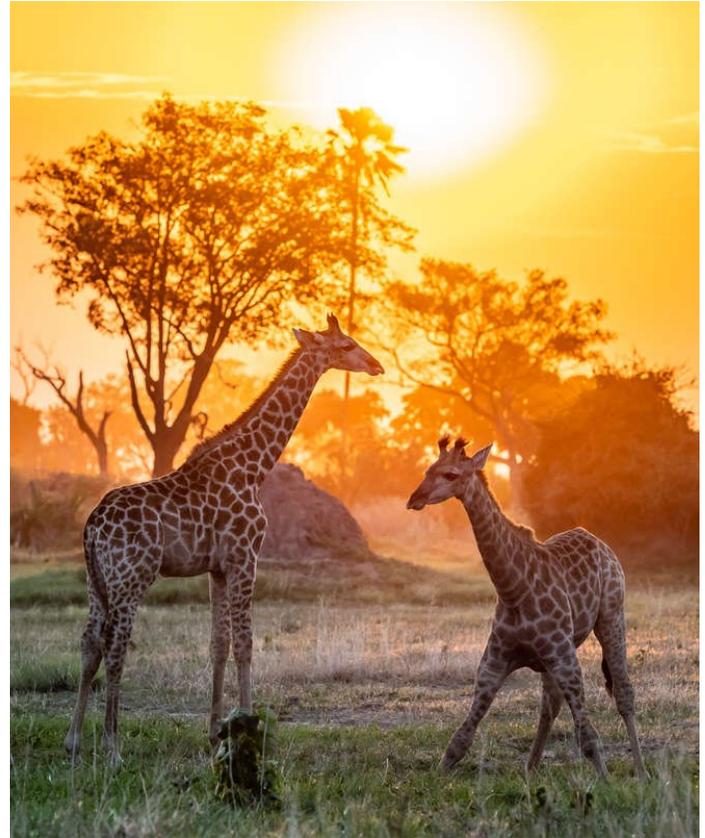
Dry Season Highlights

- June to October
- Diminished water availability results in high game concentrations and density
- Peak inundation in the Okavango (May-August)- perfect time for mokoro and boating activities
- Great visibility in leafless woodland
- Cooler and drier time of the year



MONEY

The currency in Botswana is the Pula (P) which is made up of 100 Thebe. For those travelling on safari, it is seldom necessary to change currency as US Dollars are widely accepted for tipping and most packages are fully inclusive. Botswana banks only accept US Dollars, GBP Sterling, Euro, and South African Rand in cash. However, US Dollar currency prior to 2009 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 throughout Botswana, while American Express and Debit Cards often are not. 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. US Dollars are accepted everywhere and preferred by the guides. The following is a general guideline for tipping:

- Porterage: \$1-\$2 Per Bag / Per Movement
- Airport Meet & Greet: \$5 Per Group
- Transfer Drivers: \$5 Per Person Each Way
- Taxi Drivers: 5% of the fare
- Driver Guides: \$10-\$15 Per Person / Per Day
- Safari Guides: \$15 -\$20 Per Person / Per Day, given on day of departure in lump sum.
- Lodge/camp Staff: \$5-\$10 Per Room / Per Day, given on day of departure in lump sum.
- Mokoro Polers: \$5 per person

Tip your wildlife guides in one lump sum, on the day of your departure. Porters and guides who perform a one-off service, such as mokoro polers, 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

Botswana is a wonderful destination for photography due to its diverse landscapes, prolific birdlife and variety of animal species. In many quality camps, the guides and staff are wildlife photography enthusiasts. Please note that locals might not be as comfortable with cameras as you are. Rural people are often shy, although some may request a fee in order for you to photograph them. 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

The official language is English, with Setswana being the most widely spoken African language. There are eight major Tswana tribes, each of which occupies its own separate territory with its own traditional chiefs, and each tribe maintains communal ownership over its lands.

The various ethnic groups are baSarwa (San), baTswana, baKgalagadi, haMbukushu, baYei, Bugakwe and Herero.

ELECTRICITY

In cities and towns, all electrical appliances run on 220V/240V. Outlets are round 3-pin, 15-amp plugs. While some camps/lodges can supply adaptors (3-prong round, 3-prong square, 2-prong round, 2-prong flat) it is advisable that you carry your own. Please let us know if you will be using a CPAP machine so that we can make arrangements with the camps.

TIME ZONE

Botswana standard time is GMT + 2 hours

LUGGAGE GUIDELINES

Maximum of 20kg / 44lb of soft-sided luggage per person is allowed for light aircraft flights, including hand luggage and camera equipment. It is highly recommended that you lock your luggage. It is also advisable that you do NOT pack valuable items in your checked luggage. Excess luggage is an option, at additional cost, subject to availability.



SAFETY

Botswana is considered to be one of the safest countries in Africa, but, as in most countries, common sense should be used.

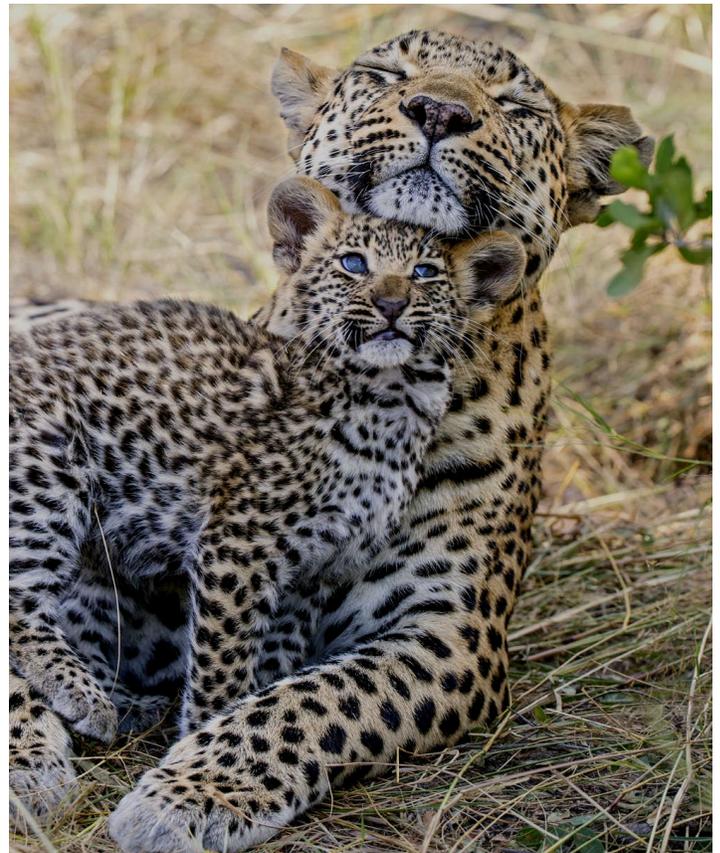
In the wildlife areas, due to the presence of wild animals, do not walk outside your lodge grounds or camp grounds at any time without a guide or listen carefully to the instructions for safety provided by your guide and safari camp management.

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

DRESS CODE

The weather in Botswana varies from extremely 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.*



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