



KUSINI
SAFARIS

SAFARI FAQs

IS IT SAFE TO GO ON SAFARI AFTER COVID-19?

Covid-19 has not taken hold in Tanzania and other African safari destination countries, infection rates remain very low. Tanzania has already opened up again for tourism and international flights are resuming. We recommend spending less time in cities which are higher risk. On safari you will be out in the wilderness in isolated camps with well trained staff and strict cleaning protocols. Please see our [Covid-19 page](#) and Covid-19 safety on safari PDF for more information.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE ARE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS BECAUSE OF COVID-19 BEFORE MY SAFARI AND I CAN'T GET THERE?

Kusini Safaris acts as the principal for your safari and we take full responsibility for making sure the arrangements are safe and work out successfully. As a small, independent operator with excellent supplier relationships we can offer a high degree of flexibility. If there is a Covid-19 spike in your area and travel restrictions come into force, we can reschedule your safari, up to 12 months in advance, free of charge.

WHAT'S THE WEATHER LIKE?

In southern Tanzania it rains approximately November-April. This time of year is very lush and beautiful, there are lots of birds around and many camps and lodges operate at low season rates. Dry season from June-October is high season, there are more tourists around but the game viewing is at its best. Northern Tanzania is much the same but with more of a pronounced separation between the short rains between October and December and the long rains of March and April. On safari it can get chilly in the evening and on open vehicles in the morning. At the coast it's humid all year round, conditions are more dependent on the wind. For special activities like scuba diving or whale shark swimming, certain times of year are much better than others.

WHAT INSURANCE DO I NEED?

Kusini Safaris insists that you get comprehensive travel insurance before travelling. This should cover your expenses in case of a medical emergency. Also look for clauses on baggage loss and missed flights. Emergency evacuation cover with the Flying Doctors (AMREF) comes as standard with all our safaris, they will fly you out to an appropriate hospital from the nearest airstrip. You should supply us with your insurance details, contact information, passport number and next of kin contacts. In Tanzania you will have our phone number and the phone numbers of your accommodations for emergency use.

DO WE NEED TO GET ANY VACCINATIONS? WHAT ABOUT GENERAL HEALTH AND EATING?

Make sure you get your vaccinations and anti-malarials sorted out well in advance. You will need to contact a travel nurse, remember you need to start taking prophylaxis sometimes weeks before you leave and for a while after you return. Be aware of side effects. Malaria is particularly prevalent in the coastal regions. Prevention is better than cure so wear long trousers in the evenings. Citronella based insect repellents work best, or Peaceful Sleep, both of which are available in Tanzania. It's a good idea to bring a small first aid kit with you: paracetamol, ibuprofen, ciprofloxacin, re-hydration salts... We try to limit the use of bottled water but sometimes it's the only drinking water available. Tap water is fine to brush your teeth with but it can be distasteful from boreholes at bush camps. At hotels and camps you will be eating well prepared food and it's ok to eat the salad. If you eat somewhere else we can't offer any guarantees. Do not underestimate the heat and the sun. Wear a hat, plenty of sun-cream and avoid over exertion during the middle of the day. Drink lots of water. Going on safari is tiring, you're on holiday, take a siesta.

DO I NEED A VISA?

Yes, get your visa before you leave and save yourself a lot of time at the airport. Contact the nearest Tanzanian embassy or apply online. Use our address details and the name of your first nights hotel on the application form. Your trip is prepaid. Alternatively we can arrange for someone to help you and your group through the visa process at the airport.

WILL MY PHONE WORK, IS THERE ANY WIFI?

Your mobile phone will usually pick up a local Tanzanian network when you switch it on. Speak to your provider about roaming, it will be expensive. Wifi is available in hotels in Dar es Salaam, Arusha and other major cities. It is increasingly available in most of the safari properties we work with. In the main area, or in your room, at certain times of day. Don't expect it to be super fast.

WHAT ABOUT CASH?

Contact your bank and make sure your credit/debit cards will work in Tanzania before you leave. Draw some local currency (Tanzanian shillings) at the airport or your hotel for small tips and shopping if you like. You really won't need much out on safari, just for drinks bills, tips and buying local arts and crafts. A few hundred US Dollars (in small denominations) is handy for paying for tips, extra activities and emergencies. Most tourist places accept dollars and Tanzanian shillings. Have a rough idea of exchange rates before you leave. You can pay national park fees by card only, although most of the time we do this for you. Most camps we work with now accept cards and will be happy to run a tab for you. You can lock up your valuables in the safe in your room or leave them with management.

WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND FOR TIPPING?

Reward excellent service and guiding, \$10/day/person for your guide and the same for the camp staff as a whole is a standard gauge. There is no need to tip everyone, if someone is aggressive in wanting to carry your bag, be equally assertive in declining. Remember to haggle when buying arts and crafts, don't compare prices to USD, GBP or Euro, this leads to inflated prices. Buy from the producers, women and artisans, not the pushy middlemen.

PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS?

Compact and bridge cameras are great for people and landscape shots, some of them also film well. They take very good pictures for affordable prices and work well in combination with a DSLR, for those who are looking to get some really good wildlife and scenery shots. Don't worry about your

DSLR body too much, spend your money on the best lenses you can afford. Check that they are compatible with each other. For most wildlife and birds, you are going to need at least 300mm. Learn how to use your camera, think about light and composition, shutter speed, aperture, ISO and how they work together. Buying a swanky camera is not going to help you if you are unsure about these things and it is no substitute for practice. Think about how you are going to carry your camera around, they will get knocked around in dusty vehicles. It is well worth picking up a quality bag to house your expensive kit. Camps and lodges will have power in the evenings so you can bring your laptop to edit pictures if you like. Bring plenty of batteries, memory cards and usb/hard drives to back up your photos. Losing pictures is the worst! Tripods can help you in camp, but otherwise they might be too bulky and unnecessary for driving, but essential for filming. You should be able to use your camera handheld, beanbags can help to rest your lens, lens filters are a useful way to combat the strong light, keep out the dust and protect your lens while getting bumped around in the 4x4. Sometimes it is nice to leave the camera in the bag and just enjoy the moment!

IS IT WORTH BRINGING SOME BINOCULARS?

Invest in a decent pair of binoculars, it will really enhance your wildlife viewing experience, and you will be able to see what your guide is on about when he's jabbering about "that bird over there" or "the leopard there, in the bush!" As with a lot of things the more you pay for binoculars, the better they are likely to be, that doesn't mean you need to spend a fortune. That said avoid buying a cheap pair as they will be more annoying than anything. Roof prism 8x42, 10x42 or 10x50 are ideal.

ANY RECOMMENDED READING?

Good field guides and books are essential preparation and accompaniment for your safari, here are a few to get you started:

1. Birds of East Africa, Stevenson & Fanshawe
2. The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals, Jonathon Kingdon
3. Bradt Tanzania Safari Guide, Phillip Briggs & Chris McIntrye
4. Sand Rivers, Peter Matthiessen
5. Ruaha National Park An Intimate View, Sue Stolberger

ANYTHING ELSE?

Don't forget chargers and spare batteries for your electrical kit, especially cameras and phones. Tanzania uses UK style 3-pronged plugs. Avoid packing suitcases if you can, soft-shelled bags are much better for fitting in small planes, 4x4s and being carried. Remember it's dusty and bumpy on safari so pack accordingly. **The light aircraft you fly in have strict luggage limits of 15kgs per person + small hand luggage.** Resist the urge to buy special safari clothes, they are not special and they are expensive. By all means bring something nice for the evenings, neutral coloured, comfortable clothes work best on safari. A sun-hat and sunglasses are essential. You must bring some hard soled shoes if you are doing any bush walking. Respect local customs, gents keep your shirt on and ladies cover up your knees and shoulders, especially in the Islamic coastal destinations. Try and learn a little Swahili, it goes a long way. In Tanzania, sometimes things don't go as planned, things run on Swahili time, try not to let it bother you too much. While we are organising your safari, ask lots of questions, this is how we can match up your expectations with what is on offer. When you get here, keep asking questions, especially when out on safari!

Check out our blog for lots more helpful tips <https://kusini-safaris.com/blog>

Tag us in your social media

Write a blog about your trip, with lots of pictures, and send it to us!

