

# South Africa: Cultural Cities & Wildlife Safaris

Pre-departure information for your tour



## Passport & visa requirements

- In order to enter South Africa and Swaziland (plus Zimbabwe on the tour extension), U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport with an expiration date extending at least six months beyond the date of reentry.
- We recommend having at least three blank passport pages for entry stamps.
- There is no visa required for U.S. and Canadian citizens traveling to South Africa and Swaziland.
- U.S. and Canadian passport holders must obtain a visa in order to enter Zimbabwe on the tour extension. We recommend obtaining your individual visa by purchasing it on arrival at the airport, at the cost of \$30USD. If you choose to purchase your visa in advance, you may do so by applying directly for [an e-visa](#). (Please note: if you would like to visit both sides of Victoria Falls, you will need to purchase a multiple-entry visa to cross the bridge to Zambia and then re-enter Zimbabwe.)
- If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact each destination country's consulate for your specific entry requirements.
- If you are or will be accompanied by a minor (under the age of 18), additional documents will be required to travel through South African ports of entry. Visit the [South African Department of Home Affairs website](#) for the most-up-to-date requirements for minors traveling to or from South Africa.

## Tour pace

- You will walk for at least 1 hour daily across mostly flat terrain, including dirt paths and unpaved walkways, with some hills and stairs.
- Travelers should be healthy enough to participate in all included walks without assistance. Adding optional excursions may increase the total amount of walking on your tour.
- You should feel comfortable managing your own baggage at times, as well as getting in and out of boats. This tour also includes long bumpy rides in safari vehicles.
- Go Ahead Tours and the Tour Director who accompanies your group are unable to

provide special, individual mobility assistance to travelers on tour. The responsibility of the Tour Director is to ensure the group as a whole enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing, individualized assistance to any one traveler.

- If you have any mobility concerns or physical restrictions, please contact our Customer Experience Team.

## Transportation & arrival information

- Round-trip flights booked through Go Ahead Tours arrive in Cape Town and depart from Johannesburg. A representative from Go Ahead Tours will meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel. Please remain in the arrival lounge, as the representative might be escorting one of your fellow travelers to the bus at the time of your arrival.
- Transfers to and from the airport at your destination are included for travelers who have purchased their flights through Go Ahead Tours. Travelers who purchase their own flights may request airport transfers with Go Ahead Tours for an additional cost.
- Flights from Port Elizabeth to Durban as well as a boat ride to Robben Island and St. Lucia Wetlands are included in the price of your tour. (The tour extension also includes one round-trip flight between Johannesburg and Victoria Falls.)
- During game drives, you will be traveling in a specially equipped safari van.
- All other included transportation on this tour is by private motor coach.

## Baggage allowance

- Please note that our travelers are limited to one checked bag and one carry-on bag per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which may include train connections or flights.
- Contact your airline(s) for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flights, which may include on-tour flights in addition to your round-trip flights to and from tour. Please note that your included on-tour flights may have more restrictive baggage

limits.

- Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage or exceed baggage size and weight restrictions. Be advised that you are responsible for any baggage fees incurred on all flights.
- Make sure you label your baggage and keep valuables, medication, and documents in your carry-on bag.

## Clothing & packing tips

- Loose-fitting, layered clothing that can accommodate varying temperatures will be most comfortable. Quick-dry material is best for hot days outside and a warmer layer may be needed for chilly evenings and early mornings.
- Comfortable closed-toes shoes, such as sneakers or lightweight hiking boots, are best for walking during the day.
- Sun protection is very important. Bring sunscreen, sunglasses, and a broad-brimmed hat to protect your face and the back of your neck from the sun.
- Occasional rain showers are common during certain seasons, so lightweight rainwear may be necessary depending on the timing of your trip.
- Insect repellent, binoculars, and a flashlight are highly recommended.

## Health

- At least 60 days prior to departure, check with your doctor or healthcare provider for the latest updates and entry requirements, or visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at [cdc.gov](#).
- Local governments may require proof of a yellow fever vaccination (often referred to as a yellow card) or a statement of medical exemption from the vaccine. This is only required of travelers arriving from a country with a risk of yellow fever virus transmission. (Please note: This does not include the U.S. or Canada.) Visit [cdc.gov/yellowfever](#) for more information. Travelers flying with South African Airways with a fuel-stop in Dakar, Senegal, will not be exiting the aircraft and therefore will not be required to present proof of vaccination due to this stop.
- Bring a small first aid kit, including antacids,

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anti-diarrhea medication, motion sickness medication, and any prescription medications in your carry on luggage.

- If you have medication that you take daily, be sure you have enough for each day of the tour and any possible delays encountered.
- If you have dietary restrictions and/or food allergies please notify Go Ahead Tours at least 30 days prior to your departure by logging in to your account and updating your traveler info. To update this information closer to your departure date, please call our Customer Experience Team.

## Cuisine

- You'll find that most cuisine in South Africa reflects the region's British, German, and Dutch colonial periods as well as Afrikaner influences. High-quality meats, vegetables, and fruits are sourced from the surrounding area's farmland.
- On the tour extension in Zimbabwe, cornmeal is an important staple used for making porridge and *sadza*, which is thicker and resembles Italy's polenta. Rice, greens, potato, pumpkin, peanuts, black-eyed peas, and local fruits are popular additions to any meal.

## Electricity & air conditioning

- South Africa operates on 220–240 volts and uses a Type M plug with two small round pins and one larger round pin.
- Zimbabwe (on the tour extension) operates on 220-240 volts and uses a Type G plug with three large, flat pins.
- We recommend packing a universal adapter, as well as a voltage converter if you plan on using your own hairdryer or other device without a built-in converter.
- Not all of the hotels on this tour will have air conditioning.
- Your hotels may provide hairdryers, irons, and other small appliances. However, these amenities cannot be guaranteed.

## Connectivity

- Wi-Fi is available in some hotels, though charges may apply.
- There is no Wi-Fi on any of the motor

coaches or safari vehicles.

- Please contact your mobile service provider for information on roaming charges.

## Time zones

- South Africa and Swaziland (plus Zimbabwe on the tour extension) are two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and six hours ahead of Eastern Time (ET). South Africa and Swaziland (plus Zimbabwe on the tour extension) do not observe Daylight Saving Time.
- From November through March, when it's noon in New York, it's 7pm on tour. From April through October, when it's noon in New York, it's 6pm on tour.

## Currency

- You will use the South African rand on this tour. (In Zimbabwe on the tour extension, it's recommended that you use U.S. dollars or South African rand.)
- You may be able to purchase South African rand in advance from your local bank or a foreign currency exchange retailer, such as Travelex.
- Please note that travelers cannot import or export more than \$25,000 in South African rand and may be required to claim any additional foreign currency at customs.
- We recommend that you carry as little local cash as possible as well as small amounts of U.S. dollars (only crisp bills printed in 2004 or later).
- ATMs are not readily available in more rural areas.
- Major North American credit cards are accepted but can be difficult to use in remote locations (Visa is the most widely accepted).
- Inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges.
- International banks and businesses primarily accept debit and credit cards that work with the EMV chip system. If you do not already have at least one debit or credit card with a chip in it, we strongly recommend requesting one from your bank prior to your tour.

## Tipping

- At the conclusion of your tour, it's customary to offer your Tour Director and driver a gratuity in local currency. Please keep current exchange rates in mind.
- We recommend tipping the equivalent of \$7USD to \$10USD per person per day for your Tour Director and the equivalent of \$3USD per person per day for your driver.
- If applicable, we also recommend tipping the equivalent of \$5USD per person for your local wildlife guides per game excursion and the equivalent of \$2USD per local guide.
- Tips can only be paid in cash.
- Gratuities for baggage handling are included in the price of your tour.

## Purchasing excursions on tour

- Most optional excursions will be available for purchase while you are on tour.
- Your driver/guide will accept cash (in USD only), Visa, or MasterCard as payment for excursions.
- Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged.
- Some optional excursions may only be purchased in advance. See page four of your tour itinerary for more information.

## Shopping

- You will have the opportunity to shop for local handicrafts, such as wood carvings and textiles, at outdoor markets and roadside stalls. Some lodges will have boutiques on the premises as well.
- Prices at most markets are negotiable, so don't be afraid to bargain—it's a great way to strike up a conversation with a local.

## Items to give or trade

- Many Africans are fond of North American goods, and travelers often bring token items (such as T-shirts, baseball caps, pens, English-language books, small toys, and crayons for children) to offer as gifts or when bartering for souvenirs.
- Offering local children candy or gum is somewhat controversial because of the

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potential lack of access to dental care.

- Go Ahead Tours strongly recommends that you don't bring any goods that will require batteries or chargers.