

FAQs Botswana, Victoria Falls, and Namibia

About Victoria Falls

The question everyone asks is, "Is it safe?"

Victoria Falls has always been its own entity and should be viewed separately from the rest of Zimbabwe with regards to crime and safety. So even when Zimbabwe was going through its worst times Victoria Falls always remained a safe destination.

Zimbabwe on the whole is now recovering and is considered a safe destination.

Tourism understandably declined dramatically during the height of the political tension, but is now rapidly on its way back up again. In Victoria Falls petty crime of course does exist as with anywhere in the world, but it is at a very low level and certainly should not deter anyone from visiting this amazing place.

Having said this, some general things to look out for:

- Street vendors can be a bit of a nuisance. Unfortunately for them, as tourism dwindled so did their income, they are just desperate to make a sale but are harmless and will generally be willing to help you.
- There are "Tourism Police Officers" on patrol throughout the town and they keep the vendors in check, if you are feeling hassled, ask one of these officers to escort you. They are easily identified by their bright yellow bibs.
- Do be aware of pick pockets and make sure that you put your camera straps around your necks, so no-one can make a quick snatch.
- Always lock valuables away in hotels.

About Botswana



Formerly known as Bechuanaland before receiving independence from Britain on the 30th September 1966, the republic of Botswana has gained stature as a wealthy and stable landlocked country bordered by Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia and South Africa. Botswana is named after its most dominant and largest tribe known as the Tswana or Batswana, with the national language known as Setswana and official language as English. Botswana a 'year round' destination is home to many of Africa's most renowned and uniquely diverse safari destinations, The Okavango delta, Moremi Game Reserve, The Central Kalahari Game reserve, The Makgadikgadi salt pans and the Chobe National Park.

With more than 17% of the country set aside as National Parks or Game reserves and a government committed to wildlife conservation and ensuring we avoid mass tourism with a low impact tourism policy in place, Botswana certainly boasts an intimate, game rich and exclusive safari experience.

Capital City: Gaborone

Population: Estimated 1.8 million with an approximate growth rate of 3.5% per annum

Currency



The local currency and tender within Botswana is Pula and Thebe.

Coins available: 5t, 10t, 25t, 50t, P1, P2 and P5 (100 thebe for P1.00)

Notes available: P10, P20, P50, P100, P200

Credit cards are widely accepted throughout Botswana with Visa and MasterCard preferred. American express is not widely accepted. ATM Machines are readily available within towns and cities throughout Botswana with Visa and Mastercard accepted.

Maestro cards are not widely accepted in all ATM machines. ATM Machines within Botswana distribute local currency only.

Electricity

Electricity supply in Botswana is 220/240v. Most common wall sockets require 3 pin round or 3 square pin plugs. It is recommended that should guests require the use of electricity whilst in areas where electricity is supplied, that one carries International

travel adaptors suitable with the above requirements. Whilst on Mobile safari and within many of the remotely located lodges and bush camps, permanent electricity is not available. Lodges and bush camps run on generator and solar power supplies, therefore using inverter systems to provide a 220v power supply to tents and main lounge areas. Guests are able to use these power supplies to charge camera batteries and smaller electrical goods, however note hair dryers, electrical shaving devices etc will not be possible. It is highly recommended that all guests carry additional and spare batteries whilst on safari.

Internet and cellular phone coverage

Cellular phone coverage and internet connection is readily available in towns and cities. The majority of wilderness locations and lodges do not have cellular phone coverage or internet connection readily available to guests. A handful of lodges within the delta and Savuti regions offer limited WIFI connection to guests, available either for the use in one's personal room only or alternatively within the main lounge area, guests to supply own laptops etc. It is preferred that guests do not use Satellite phones/ cellular phones and or skype connection whilst in the bush lodges and camps in the vicinity of other guests to avoid any disturbances.

Lodges and hotels within Maun, Kasane, Victoria falls and Livingstone offer internet connection and cellular phone coverage. Whilst on Safari, emergency contact between the safari operators and office bases in towns is via Radio link and/or Satellite phone connections.

Luggage restrictions

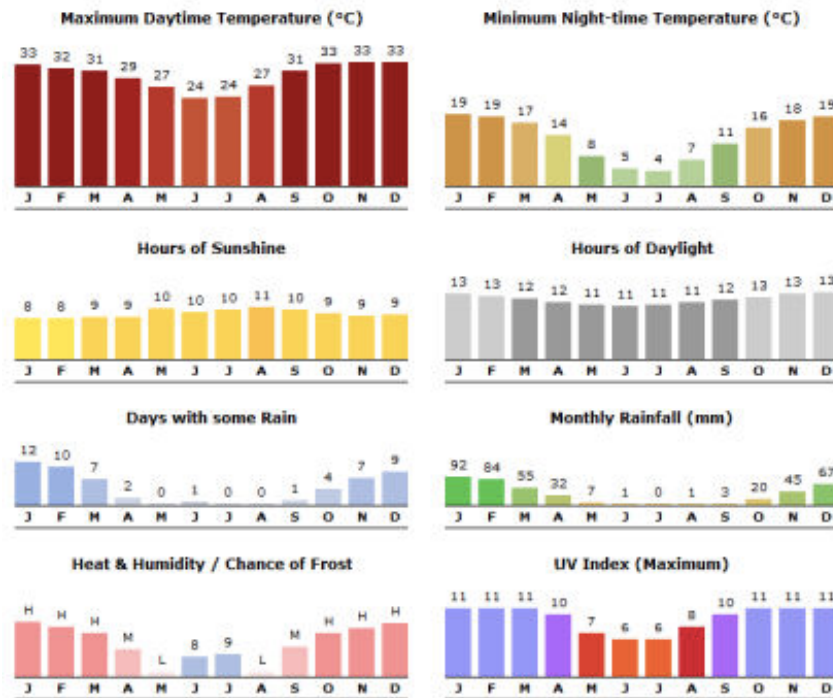
Small aircrafts allow a maximum of 20kg's per person for luggage (inclusive of hand luggage) Bags to please be soft and easy to handle. Please note that large, hard suitcases and heavy luggage will not be accepted on light aircraft. Suitcases, oyster cases, and soft sided bags with trolley handles, metal frames and wheels do NOT constitute as soft bags and cannot fit in the luggage pods of the aircraft. Please note luggage restrictions are extremely strict and we ask all guests to adhere to these, standard small daypack hand luggage restrictions apply (note: not the standard hard trolley bag hand luggage size). Luggage dimensions should not exceed 25cm (10 inches) wide, 30cm (12 inches) high and 62 cm (24 inches) long. Anything larger and the luggage will unfortunately not fit in the aircraft's baggage compartment. Should passengers have excess luggage, arrangements can be made to store the excess for the duration of their stay in Botswana or excess luggage can be booked to accompany guests at an additional cost. Recommended luggage requirements for mobile camping safaris are as per the above 18kg's per person in soft bags.

Water Levels

Water levels are continuously changing dependant on each year's rainfall and flood levels. Should water levels be high, it is likely that some roads may close due to flooding. Bush airstrips are also affected; some have to close when water levels are high – requiring properties to use alternative airstrips nearby and therefore longer road/game drive transfers into camp.

Weather

November to March are summer months and rainy season in Botswana. Days and nights are generally hot with temperatures reaching +30c most days. As it is also the rainy season, showers are to be expected.



Health

Botswana is a malaria area, you are therefore required to take all necessary precautions, prior to arrival please contact your local doctor for further information on recommended prophylactics etc.

Many lodges and safari companies will supply you with mosquito repellents, however we do recommend that you carry this with you –

YELLOW FEVER Vaccinations are recommended for any person, travelling to or via Zambia and South Africa, even if only in transit. Guests arriving in Botswana from Kenya or other yellow fever affected countries may also be required to show vaccination records – please contact your local GP/ Embassy for more information.

What to pack***(separate packing list will be supplied)**

Depending upon the time of year you are travelling to Botswana, lightweight clothing in neutral colours such as cotton and cotton blends are most suitable.

During winter and rainy season months, warm/windproof jackets are strongly recommended.

Walking shoes and Sandals are recommended whilst in the bush areas, Swimming costumes are also recommended should you wish, as many lodges do have swimming pools. For evenings we suggest lightweight neutral long sleeved shirts and trousers as this assists in protection against mosquitos.

Regarding Camera equipment: We strongly recommend that you ensure you carry sufficient/extra camera film or memory cards for your cameras, as once on safari there are very few places to purchase these. We also recommend that you carry a battery charger and extra batteries, as although in many places these can be charged, there may be times when this is not possible – especially whilst on a camping mobile safari. Equipment needs to be kept in soft sided cases and we recommend you carry this with you as hand luggage planes.

How safe is Botswana

Botswana is considered a safe travel destination and is both financially and politically stable. As is the case in most destinations, the larger cities and population areas is where crime would be more prevalent but once on safari such problems are extremely scarce. It is however, a good idea to leave valuables such as expensive jewellery, watches etc. at home, therefore eliminating any temptation to possible thievery. We recommend luggage locks when travelling through international destinations.

Visa

Contact your local/nearest Botswana Embassy or high commission.

All visitors to Botswana require a valid passport with a minimum of 6 months validity.

Return or onward tickets and sufficient funds to cover stay in Botswana.

Maximum of 30 days to visit Botswana is approved on arrival at border entry.

Currently visitors holding the following passports and nationality do not require a Visa for travel to Botswana and will be granted a 30day permit on arrival. We ask you reconfirm these details based on your individual nationality.

- All EC (European Community) countries
- USA, UK, South Africa, Scandinavia, Uruguay
- Western Samoa and countries from former Yugoslavia
- Commonwealth countries (except for Ghana, India, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Mauritius)

Entry and visa requirements are subject to change at any time, therefore we ask you to ensure you personally check all entry requirements in advance and prior to travel.