

Safari Do's & Don'ts And General Info

Arrival

Get some rest the first day. The elevation in Kenya and Tanzania is 5000+ ft and you are in a different time zone.

Money Exchange

Do not exchange money on the street. You may be approached by someone willing to give you a 50% to 70% premium for your dollars. This is considered the black market and is illegal. Do not therefore, get involved. Hotels, Camps and Lodges can change money, but sometimes the rate is slightly lower.

Safekeeping of Passport and Valuables

Please keep your passport and money ON YOU at ALL times. Never leave money or valuables in your room or in your vehicle. You can keep valuables in security boxes at the hotel, camps and lodges. While on safari, you should avoid wearing expensive jewelry.

Credit Cards

Credit cards such as American Express, Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted in Nairobi hotels and in most hotels, camps and lodges.

Security

Do not walk around Nairobi or Arusha at night and apply extra caution on weekends when Nairobi is relatively deserted. Please take the same care and common sense precautions that you would do in any other part of the world.

Hustlers

Be careful of the "hustlers" in Nairobi and Arusha. You may hear a hard luck story which is designed to get you to donate money to some cause. We strongly suggest you do not get involved.

Communications

You may make international telephone calls home. Do not however, expect all the hotels, lodges & camps in Kenya to be able to get through. Nairobi is the best place to make these calls. Nairobi hotels have telex, facsimile machines and internet services.

Spectacles & Contacts

On safari be prepared for bumpy and dusty roads. These can be an irritant to contact lens wear. Eye drops and a spare pair of glasses are a sensible precaution.

Packing

PACK LIGHT, laundry facilities are available throughout your safari. Remember your 20 kg on your return from East Africa. Excess luggage charges may apply.

A good size for a safari bag will be approximately 4500 cu.in. in size.

Luggage Allowances

If your itinerary includes any flying in light aircraft around Nairobi or Arusha while on safari, you are restricted to a maximum of 15 kgs (33 lbs), including hand luggage (total luggage). It is extremely important that you pack appropriately when air travel in Africa is required.

Clothing

Safari is casual and comfortable. Dress mainly for outdoor comfort with a change of informal clothes for the evening. Evenings and early morning can be chilly especially on the mountain areas. Warm jerseys, socks and walking shoes or sneakers are recommended. Footwear should be low-heeled and comfortable. There is not much walking and you stay in your vehicle during game runs. Bring a light-weight raincoat and a hat for sun protection. Roof hatches on safari vehicles are left open whilst game viewing. Although evening wear is informal, the Mt Kenya Safari Club at Nanyuki and some restaurants in Nairobi do require gentlemen to wear a tie and jacket for dinner, and ladies, equivalent evening attire.

Luggage Tag

Place the safari luggage tags we have provided on your baggage. These are used to identify your bags by your driver-guide.

Punctuality

Please be on time when you meet at your Land Cruisers for game drives.

Sun

The equatorial sun is strong. Too much exposure can cause dehydration, nausea, dizziness and headaches. We recommend that you wear sun screen and a hat, as well as a strong pair of dark glasses. All the lodges, hotels and camps have swimming pools. When sunbathing use common sense.

Drinking Water

In Kenya and Tanzania while on safari, we recommend that you do not drink the water from the taps and even out of the thermos or flasks provided. We recommend instead, that you purchase bottled water at the lodges. Use mouthwash to brush and wash your teeth. Ice is generally frozen from boiled water and is ok for consumption.

Food

Food in Kenya and Tanzania is delicious, varied and plentiful. Africa's famed fruits abound, pineapples, pawpaw, mangoes, avocados, passion fruits, banana, pears and strawberries to name a few. Fresh vegetables are equally abundant and main dishes feature both Kenyan and Tanzanian favorites as well as featured cuisines from many other parts of the world. The hotels, lodges and camps in which you stay are renowned for their high standard of cuisine. However, a change of climate and traveling can, cause some minor sickness. Eating in moderation, avoiding cold buffet lunch tables that have been exposed to the mid-day sun, and fasting for a day (while drinking plenty of bottled water) should you be stricken, are sensible precautions.

Spirits, beers, wine and cigarettes

All are available in Kenya and Tanzania. The price of soft drinks and beer is reasonable, while imported spirits, wine and cigarette tend to be on the expensive side.

Meal plan

Generally, unless otherwise requested, bed and breakfast is the meal plan provided for in Nairobi, and full board on Safari.

Anti-malaria medication

We strongly recommend that you take anti-malaria medication. Malaria is rare in most highland areas, but traveling in the hot bush, and coastal areas requires precautions. If, on you return home, you develop influenza symptoms, please see you doctor immediately as you may well have contracted malaria.

Medical services

The larger towns in Kenya and Tanzania have pharmacy and hospitals, but you should carry with you adequate supplies of your own medicines and toilet items as in the smaller towns these cannot be obtained. A spare pair of prescription glasses is recommended.

Hospitals

There are several hospitals in Nairobi and Arusha staffed by doctors with internationally recognized degrees. Most Nairobi hotels have their own house doctors for emergencies, appointments can be made if a doctor is necessary.

Electricity

Most hotels and lodges outside Nairobi and Arusha generate their own electricity. However, take a small lightweight flashlight as some generators are usually only run for short periods in the early morning and again in the evening from 1830 to 2230 hrs.. The voltage is 220-240 AC, suitable for appliances with the exceptions of those manufactured in the USA and Canada.

It is important that everyone consider their electrical requirements before departing on safari and plan accordingly. For instance, if you plan on bringing a hair dryer, a typical electrical converter will work for you, but for more sophisticated electrical devices, you may require a transformer. If you visit the websites listed here, you can find information that explains the electrical adapters you will need for Kenyan and Tanzania as well as some relevant discussion regarding converters and transformers.

Travel Oasis World Electrical Guide

<http://navigatorenterprises.site.yahoo.net/world-electric-guide.html>

Recommended Kenyan Electrical Adapters

<http://navigatorenterprises.site.yahoo.net/grounadwa7wa.html>

Transformers vs. Converters Link

<http://navigatorenterprises.site.yahoo.net/voltage-converters.html>

Photography

DO NOT take photographs of the locals without their permission. NEVER take photographs of military, military institutions, armed forces barracks, policemen, the President, Government officials, or airports. Always keep your camera loaded and ready for action. You never know when it is going to start. If you intend to purchase extra film, we suggest you do so in Nairobi, as often the safari lodges and camps have limited stock. You may wish to carry your equipment in a dust-proof bag as the roads can be extremely dusty. Bean bags will be provided in the safari vehicles to use for camera mounts.

Wild animals

Do please remember that our animals are wild and should never be approached on foot. Please be alert and cautious in the lodges and camps when walking from your room to the public areas.

Tipping

Most people, when visiting a foreign country, like to be given some guidelines regarding tipping. Africa Wildlife Photography and Travel hosted safaris have the tips for driver-guides and porters built into price of the safari. While on safari, your host will handle all the tipping for the porters upon arrival and departure of a lodge as well as for the driver-guides.

Tipping for restaurants and drinks are typically 10%. Note, that if a menu lists a 10% service charge as included, you do not need to tip.

Diver-Guide/Safari Guide

Get to know both your Driver-guide and your Safari guide. Their knowledge of Africa is a bottomless treasure of travel. Be friendly. Sometimes, at the outset of a safari, the driver-guides can be shy and need encouragement to open up. Ask a lot of questions. Don't be afraid to make requests of both your driver-guide and your safari guide.

Air ticket reconfirmation

Air tickets must be reconfirmed for all domestic and international flights. We be delighted to assist. In order for us to do this, we must be able to personally check you tickets. We will do all possible to secure your specific seat requests but this cannot be guaranteed.

Flying Doctors Society

The Flying Doctor's Society of Africa has been evacuating patients by air since the 1950's. In the event of a medical emergency, you will be flown back to Nairobi where an ambulance will be waiting to move you immediately to a leading Nairobi hospital. Evacuations will not be carried out if the nature of the medical complaint is minor.

The safari experience

Please look at any inconveniences with a positive attitude. Flat tires and a few unexpected delays are all part of the safari experience.