

GENERAL SAFARI INFORMATION:

GEOGRAPHY:

- Kenya lies on the equator and shares common borders with Tanzania and Uganda, which makes up the region of "East Africa". Kenya is roughly the size of Texas and Spain.

PEOPLE:

- There are over 40 tribal ethnic groups, each with their own dialect, though most people in the country speak Kiswahili as well as their own tribal language. English is commonly spoken in the major towns and at all lodges and hotels.

CLIMATE:

- The Kenyan climate is very pleasant and variations in altitude and terrain can create contrasts. Generally in the Highlands the climate is cool, elsewhere the temperatures can reach up to 30 / 35 degrees C during the day. The coast is humid and balmy. Over most of the country there are two rainy seasons:
 - The Short rains which occur from late October through November
 - The Long rains which occur from late March to end of May
- It is very possible to visit Kenya during the rainy season. The parks are usually less frequented which is great for tourists who prefer to enjoy "exclusive game viewing" without other vehicles in the vicinity. The National Parks are then fresh and green with beautiful flowers springing alive all over the plains.
- July and August are the coolest months and are often overcast especially in the morning. December - Mid. March is the warmest time of the year.

HEALTH PRECAUTIONS:

- Kenya is considered a generally low risk place to travel. Malarial mosquitoes are not present in large quantities inland due to the high altitude of the country, but there is a higher risk at the coast and it is recommended that you take Malaria prophylaxis. There are **no mandatory inoculations** required for Kenya but clients should contact their doctor or specialized travel clinic for further advice. (Our personal recommendation would be Hepatitis A & B / C). Clients traveling from India / South America / Singapore or from across the tropics, kindly note that it is mandatory to have a yellow fever vaccination and certificate.

INSURANCE:

- There is no national welfare scheme in Kenya and visitors to Kenya are responsible for their own medical expenses. We recommend for our clients to have an emergency evacuation insurance which we include in most quotations (pls. check your inclusions / exclusions). All clients are requested to inform us about:
 - their overseas travel insurance details- passport numbers
 - a contact person at home in case of any emergency
 - your passport number and nationality
 - your birth date
 - your blood group

Whilst every care is taken of you and your property, we cannot be held responsible for any accidents, injury, or illness that you may incur or for any loss or damage to baggage. We therefore advise that you and your property be fully covered by your own insurance and it is advisable to have separate baggage and ticket insurance.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSURANCE:

- We offer the above as an inclusion in most safaris (which is clearly mentioned) and if not included, you are free to purchase it through us. This is basically an insurance that is already included in most overseas insurances as they offer repatriation to your home country. However, we still highly recommend the local second insurance as a back-up as evacuation takes place by air (FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE) and is far more effective than the overseas insurance. You are transported by air from the point of emergency (the closest airstrip) to Nairobi. (to a local well renowned hospital with good medical care)

DRINKING WATER:

- Please ensure that you drink bottled mineral water only throughout your stay in Kenya. (except for accommodations where drinking water is put into your room)

CURRENCY:

- The monetary unit is the Kenyan Shilling. Most of the hotels, lodges and shops in Kenya will accept major credit cards. Reverting your Kenyan shillings into hard currency is easily done at the airport, (Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi and Moi International Airport, Mombasa) or at the major hotel and banks. As there is no longer "exchange control" the rate of exchange varies between banks, foreign exchange bureaus and hotels. It is recommended that visitors do not change money on the black market, as they are more likely to receive a lower rate of exchange. There is an opportunity for tourists to change their Euros, USD. or GBP among other currency.

Never keep all of your cash in the same place, keep it in different pockets and split it up between different bags. If you are carrying USD\$, please take bills dated 2006 or later as earlier dated bills can be very difficult to change and may not be accepted (as well as torn and dirty bills – the crisper the better!). You will get a better exchange rate for \$50 or \$100 USD\$ bills. A number of low denomination USD\$ bills are useful for tipping although some locals in remote areas may prefer Kenyan Shillings, as sometimes it's difficult for them to change USD\$. **Please note travellers cheques are no longer accepted.**

American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are all widely accepted. Major hotels now also accept payment by credit card, as do major safari companies, travel agencies and restaurants. Almost every bank now has an ATM and in the cities they are increasingly being installed at petrol stations. All ATMs will only dispense Kenyan Shillings. Please note: Where credit cards are accepted, the payments will normally be recorded in US Dollars, regardless of the card's default currency. Most small shops will not accept payment other than cash.

LUGGAGE:

- Please ensure that your baggage is packed in soft bags and should weigh no more than 15 to a maximum of 20 kgs per person. It is possible to store luggage during the safari either at your hotel if you are returning thereafter your trip or in our offices. Most lodges have laundry facilities at an extra charge. On air safaris the maximum luggage allowance per person is 15kgs including hand luggage.

PLASTIC BAGS:

- According to the gazette notice No. 2334 of 14th March 2017, all plastic carrier bags regardless of their thickness or color used as secondary packages are banned with effect from 28th August 2017. Visitors are advised to avoid packing any plastic bags in their suitcases or in carry-on hand luggage before flying to Kenya. Items purchased at the airport before boarding the aircraft should be removed from plastic bags. Please check hand luggage before disembarking in Nairobi and any plastic bags should be left in the plane. Similarly the transparent "zip-lock" plastic bags that some airlines require passengers to use for keeping liquids, cosmetics, toiletries etc. separately in hand luggage are also not permitted to be brought into Kenya and should be removed and left on the plane before disembarking in Nairobi.

VOLTAGE:

- Voltage throughout the country is 220-240AC. Most safari vehicles have a cigarette lighter socket operating on a 12-volt system. On request, we are happy to furnish your safari vehicle with an inverter free of charge. Pls. request for the same. In most lodges and camps there is no mains power and generators are used during limited times during the day and in the evening. Please carry adaptors with a square 3-pin English standard option and sufficient batteries for photographic equipment.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- All camps and lodges have radio or phone communication with Nairobi. The outside world is of very little interest or consequence to us on safari, but if there are urgent messages they should be sent to our office in Nairobi for onward transmission by E-mail/Tel. Most camps and lodges have excellent network connections nowadays and it is very possible to call from a lodge / camp to your home country or for your cell phone to be used. Some phones switch to automatic roaming. However, to be on the safe side, you can purchase a Safaricom or Airtel sim card at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (approx. Kenya Shillings 200/-). You can then purchase a credit from as little as Kenya Shillings 500 to 1,000/- to use for international calls. Alternatively, you can request our office in Nairobi to purchase it on your behalf before your arrival as an extra service free of charge. (Only purchase cost of sim card and funds will be charged to you). It is further possible to purchase a modem for your laptop / computer for internet usage in the bush. Again, we can assist in organizing this for you at cost price.

VEHICLE:

- Your vehicle will be **custom built and safari equipped 4WD Landcruiser or Nissan Patrol**, not a pop-top van. Our vehicles have game viewing hatches / pop-up roofs or are open, are comfortable, and equipped with HF Radio.

ON SAFARI:

- When you are out on safari our schedule is completely flexible. Our staff, and vehicles are there exclusively for your safari. We can spend the day exactly as you wish. The best times for viewing animals are the cool hours of the early morning and late afternoon. Therefore, our usual routine will be to have an early rise with a cup of tea or coffee before leaving camp on a game drive, returning to camp midmorning for breakfast. We'll stay in camp in the heat of the day and go out again after tea in the afternoon, or stay out the whole day with a picnic lunch. Your guide will be with you to plan your day, tell you about what you see, take you to the loveliest places, look after any formalities or negotiations with the local people, and take care of your safety and comfort. All our guides are fluent in English, speak the local language, are proficient in bush craft, and can tell you about the animals, identify birds, and help you learn more about the world around you.

CLOTHING ON

SAFARI :

- Light cotton clothing is recommended, ideal Safari outfits can be purchased in Kenya. T-Shirts, short and long cotton trousers (or jeans), a sun hat, long sleeved shirts and sweaters for game drives (it can be cold in the morning & evening), swimming costume as some lodges / camps have swimming pools. Good and comfortable walking shoes (e.g. sneakers). A rain / wind jacket is a good idea too. Dress code in general is casual on safari and formal in 5 star hotels in Nairobi.

SECURITY:

- Avoid carrying large sums of money. Be sensible with hand bags, jewellery and camera cases. Avoid walking at night. Lock up valuables in the safety deposit boxes, provided by most hotels / lodges and camps. In some bush camps, there are no safety deposit boxes, pls. carry anything really valuable with you.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT:

- Do not photograph local people without their prior permission. Your driver/guide will advise you further on this sensitive matter. Take a good supply of film with you as local supplies are limited when on safari or for digital photography, pls. carry extra memory cards. Do also carry spare batteries (please note that rechargeable batteries cannot be relied upon as some camps and lodges only have solar or generator power). Binoculars are invaluable for game and bird viewing with your guide but we recommend that you carry your own pair along for convenience.

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS:

- As of August 30, 2015 one can now apply for the Kenyan Visa on-line at least 07 days prior your arrival date. Please log on to...<https://immigration.ecitizen.go.ke/index.php?id=5>
- If you want to get the visa upon arrival, please have the correct money in US Dollar cash and be prepared for queues. Please note obtaining the correct entry visas are your responsibility.
- A valid passport with a minimum of 6 months validity on arrival and at least two blank pages is mandatory.

DANGERS OF THE BUSH AND PARK REGULATIONS:

- Although the animals we see may seem completely unconcerned by our presence, they are wild and they are dangerous.
 - DO NOT walk outside the limits of the camp.
 - DO NOT get out of the safari vehicle in the park without first consulting your guide
 - DO NOT climb out onto the roof etc. of your safari vehicle to photograph or view animals. This is strictly forbidden and can be fined by the park rangers.
- All the above are against park regulations. It is also against regulations to sit on top of the vehicle, play loud music in the bush, or to attempt to provoke some "action" from an uncooperative animal by hooting, whistling, or banging the side of the vehicle etc. Littering is of course prohibited. Should you come across an unwelcome guest - please call a member of staff to deal with.

LOCAL TIME:

- Kenya has a single time zone which is GMT + 3. For the current local time.

SOUVENIOR SHOPPING:

- Kenya offers lovely artifacts, crafted by hand. There are some that are made of endangered wood which we discourage you to buy. Also, pls. **DO NOT** purchase any items made from ivory. If you are unsure of the material used on the product, please do not buy it. Other prohibited items are Rhino horns, tortoise / turtle shells, coral, wild animal hides, skin or fur. **Those caught purchasing or trafficking banned goods will be prosecuted and receive prison sentences and/or fines.**
- Do not buy shells and other marine animal products as souvenirs as this encourages further plundering of the reefs and beaches.
- In the US, it is illegal to possess any part of a wild bird - even a single feather.

EXTRAS/ INCLUSIONS / EXCLUSIONS:

- Pls. note that the **majority of camps and lodges do not** include beverages and excursions. These are extras payable. All Nairobi Hotels are always booked and quoted on bed and breakfast. Therefore meals such as lunch and dinner are NOT included. All safari lodges are usually quoted on full board accommodation and all coast hotels include half board.

PHOTOS – prohibited areas:

It is prohibited to take pictures of State house, airports, military installations, police stations, government facilities, any border post, soldiers or police. Pls. always seek advice from your driver/guide before taking pictures of tribes. Not everyone will agree to have their photograph taken randomly.

TIPPING:

Although tipping is a safari tradition, it is never compulsory and should only be done if you have received good services. The staff very much appreciates receives gratuity from you, our guests, because it is one way of assuring them, they are doing a good job.

Most lodges have a staff tip box located at the reception, or a central location. We recommend a **\$ 3.00 - 5.00 per client per day in a tip box**. Tips left here will be divided amongst the porters and waiters and all other lodge staff. If you are particularly satisfied with assistance received from someone, a personal tip is also acceptable. However, driver/guides are always tipped separately.

As for driver/guides: we do recommend approx. **USD. 30.00 PER DAY PER VEHICLE** as a recommended guideline.

It is not acceptable for staff to ask you for a tip or for a present for their family to be sent home etc. and we would appreciate it if you reported any behavior of this sort.

CHARITABLE GIVING AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS:

- We recommend as part of our responsible travel policy that you do not give money or gifts directly to local people. We have links with local projects/schools that would appreciate your support. Please ask your guide for further details. If you would like to contribute to these donations of clothing, pens and pencils are greatly appreciated.

In case of further questions, pls. do not hesitate to contact us!