



# East Africa

A pre-travel pack for Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda.

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# *“Your Journey to Africa Starts Here: Growth, Grace & Grandeur!”*

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ABOUT EAST AFRICA

# Important facts

East Africa, home to over 400 million people and major urban centres like Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Addis Ababa, has a strong agricultural sector and a vital tourism industry due to its wildlife and natural beauty.

The region is culturally diverse with numerous ethnic groups, has a rich historical background, and faces a mix of stability and conflict regarding governance and economic development.



## ABOUT EAST AFRICA

# Wild animals of East Africa

East Africa is renowned for its rich biodiversity and wildlife, featuring iconic parks like the Serengeti and Maasai Mara, which are home to the Great Migration and animals such as wildebeest, zebra, lion and elephant.

East Africa is also home to an impressive variety of lesser-known species, including unique endemic birds such as the shoebill and various sunbirds. Unique landscapes like the volcanic mountains of the Rwenzori range and the lush rainforests of the Albertine Rift provide crucial habitats for creatures like mountain gorillas and many other rare and endangered species.

## CLIMATE

# Seasons in East Africa

East Africa typically experiences two main seasons: the dry season and the rainy season. The dry season runs from May to October, characterised by warm temperatures and little rainfall, while the rainy season occurs from November to April, with varying intensities of rainfall, peaking between March and May.

Summer	December – February	Autumn	March – May
Winter	June – August	Spring	September – November

## TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

# Visa and travel insurance

## VISA REQUIREMENTS

Visa requirements vary by country. Kenya now uses an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA); Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda use eVisas. See our [East Africa visa application guide](#) for the full breakdown.

## CHECK VIA SHERPA FOR YOUR PASSPORT

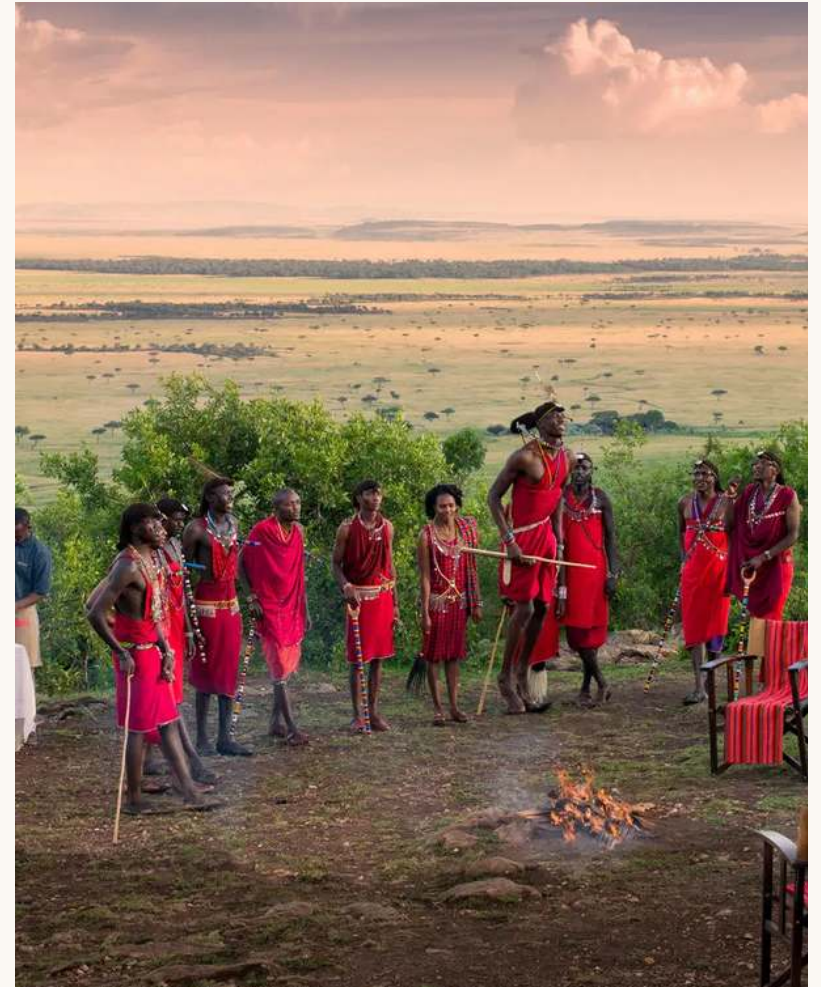
Kenya      [US](#) · [UK](#) · [Australian](#)  
Tanzania   [US](#) · [UK](#) · [Australian](#)  
Uganda     [US](#) · [UK](#) · [Australian](#)  
Rwanda     [US](#) · [UK](#) · [Australian](#)

Travelling on a different passport? Click any link above and change the country of passport issue on Sherpa.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is essential for every safari traveller. Safari.com can arrange cover for your trip, with a range of packages to suit different needs and budgets. Your safari specialist will walk you through the current options.

Not yet insured? [Submit the travel insurance form](#) and we will arrange it for you, time permitting.



## TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

# Essential travel documents

### Passport

Must be valid for at least six months beyond your intended return date. Ensure it has 4 consecutive blank pages.

### Visa documents

Printout of your visa approval if required by your destination country. Confirm the visa type (tourist, business, etc.) and its validity.

### Documents on travel to East Africa

Printed and digital copies of your general information document on travel to East Africa including flight bookings, departure and arrival details, as well as confirmations of hotel bookings or stay arrangements.

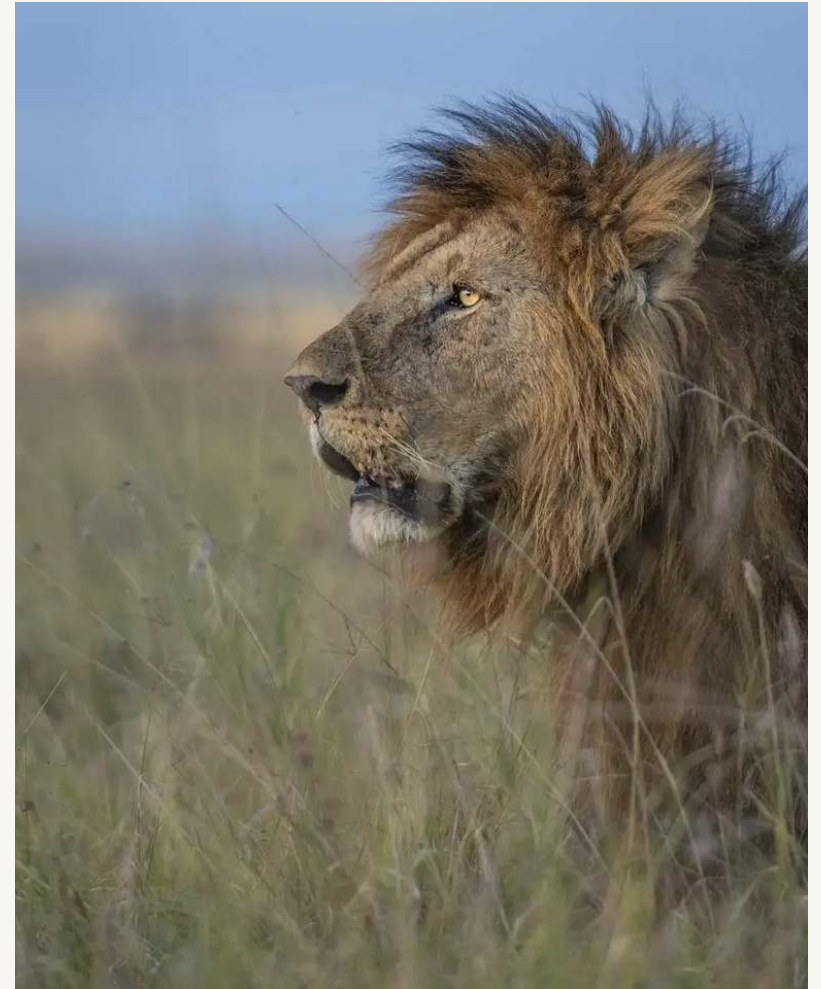
### Proof of travel insurance.

### Health documents

A doctor's note with prescriptions if you're carrying medication.

### Emergency contacts

List of emergency contacts, including family and friends, and your country's embassy in the destination country.



## TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

# Airport taxes and baggage

### AIRPORT DEPARTURE TAXES

Many African airports charge departure taxes, typically included in your ticket price. However, some require direct payment in US dollars, ranging from \$3 to \$50 per person. For specific details, consult your Safari.com specialist or check your flight reservations online.

### COMMERCIAL FLIGHT BAGGAGE POLICIES

#### CHECK-IN LUGGAGE

Weight: 20 kg (44 lbs)

Size: 90 cm (H) × 72 cm (W) × 45 cm (L)

#### HAND LUGGAGE

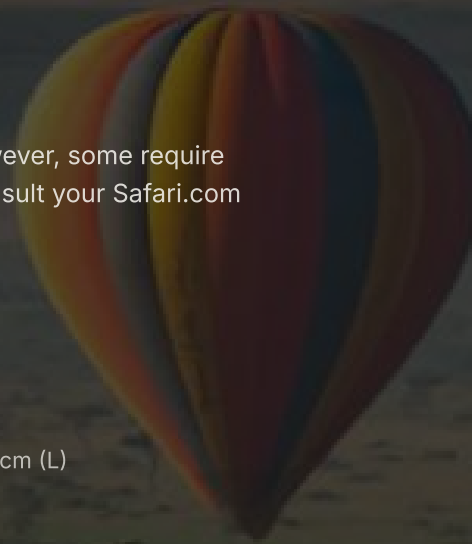
Weight: 8 kg (17 lbs)

Size: 56 cm (H) × 36 cm (W) × 23 cm (L)

### LIGHT AIRCRAFT RESTRICTIONS

When taking charter flights on light aircraft, pack in a soft-sided bag with a maximum weight of 15 kg (33 lbs) per person. Most safari lodges offer laundry facilities, allowing you to minimise your clothing.

You can also store excess luggage at your hotel or the airport if you're returning there. Some charter companies have a weight limit of 100 kg per person; if you exceed this, be aware that you may need to pay for an additional seat due to weight distribution requirements.

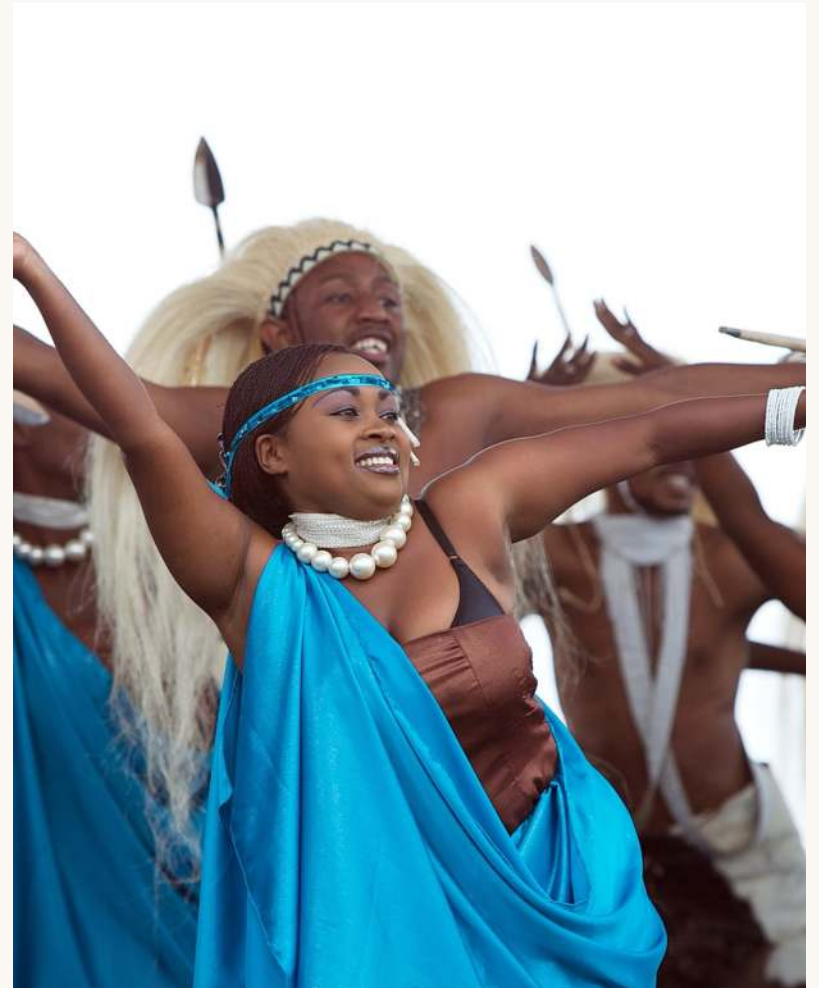


## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

# General health requirements

In East Africa, travellers should be free of diseases like tuberculosis and cholera, common in some areas. Bring enough medications, along with wristbands, doctor's notes and prescription details for emergencies.

For physical activities like trekking or rafting, a doctor's letter confirming fitness is required.



## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

# Vaccinations & health risks

## IMPORTANT VACCINATIONS FOR TRAVEL

East Africa is mostly a safe destination, but precautions are still necessary. Yellow fever requirements depend on your country of origin and country of travel; some countries require proof of vaccination if you are arriving from a yellow-fever-endemic country. Consult your doctor or a travel clinic, and your safari specialist will flag the latest entry requirements before you fly. If exempt from the vaccine for medical reasons, a letter from your GP is required.

## HEALTH RISKS TO CONSIDER

**Altitude sickness.** Risks associated with high-altitude trekking; acclimatisation is necessary.

**Insect-borne diseases.** Use insect repellent and wear protective clothing.

**Access to healthcare.** Medical facilities may be limited in rural areas; carry a basic medical kit and know how to seek help. Carry necessary medications, prescriptions and medical documents for emergencies.



## MONETARY GUIDE

# Manage currency in East Africa

Can I exchange currency in East Africa countries? You can easily convert cash to local currency at airports, hotels or banks.

## TIPS FOR MANAGING CURRENCY IN EAST AFRICA

### Currency exchange

You can easily convert cash to local currency at airports, hotels or banks.

### Small denominations

Bring small bills for tips and gratuities, as it can be difficult to find change at lodges.

### Check your bills

Ensure your USD bills are printed after 2006, as older notes won't be accepted.

### Credit cards and ATMs

MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted, but transaction fees may be higher. ATMs are available in larger towns, though they may occasionally be out of order or affected by power cuts.



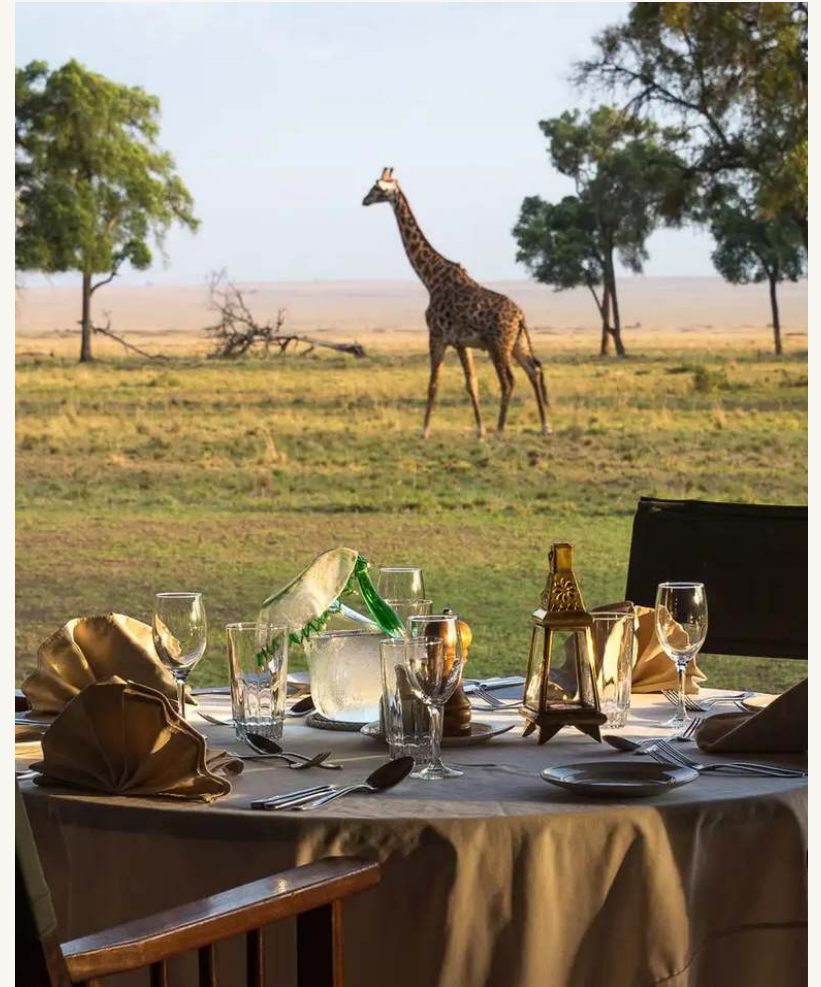
MONETARY GUIDE

# Tipping and gratuities

East African countries accept US Dollars.

MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted, though transaction fees may be higher in some countries.

*Safari.com was voted Africa's Leading Safari Company at the World Travel Awards in 2024 and 2025.*





CUSTOMS & ETIQUETTE

# Communications

CHECK LODGE AMENITIES

Before your trip, confirm with the lodge what connectivity options are available. Some might offer Wi-Fi or other communication facilities, while others may only provide limited access.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Understand the emergency protocols of your camp or lodge. Knowing how and when they can reach help is crucial, especially in more remote areas.

RESPECTING OTHERS

If you bring a satellite phone, adhering to the guidelines to minimise disturbances is considerate. Keeping conversations brief and discreet not only respects fellow guests but enhances the overall experience for everyone.

POWER MANAGEMENT

Satellite phones can drain batteries, so consider bringing a portable charger or extra batteries to ensure you stay powered up.

## CUSTOMS & ETIQUETTE

# Dress code and language guide

## DRESS CODE

Hotels and lodges typically have relaxed dress codes. Dress conservatively in urban areas, on beaches and in rural communities, particularly in Islamic regions.

## LANGUAGE GUIDE

Swahili (Kiswahili) is a Bantu language with Arabic loanwords. English is widely spoken, but a few words of Swahili are greatly appreciated.

## GREETINGS

Jambo	Hello
Habari	How are you?
Habari gani	The news?
Hujambo	How are you?
Sijambo	I'm fine
Mambo	Hello (informal)
Shikamoo	To elders
Marahaba	To 'Shikamoo'
Salama	Peaceful

## USEFUL PHRASES

Asante	Thank you
Asante sana	Thanks a lot
Pole	Sorry
Badae	Later
Lala salama	Sleep well
Nashukuru	I'm thankful
Tafadhali	Please

## BASICS & FAREWELLS

Poa	Cool
Ndiyo	Yes
Hapana	No
Kwa heri	Goodbye
Tutaonana	See you



SAFARI TRAVEL TIPS

# Suggested items to pack

**Insect repellent.** Strong formula for mosquitoes.

**Binoculars.** Lightweight and portable, essential for wildlife.

**Day bag.** Small backpack or tote for daily essentials.

**Hat and sunscreen.** For daytime excursions.

**Water bottle.** Reusable and sturdy.

**Camera and lenses.** Waterproof bag for dust and moisture.

**Footwear.** Closed walking shoes for drives; sandals for the lodge.

**Rain jacket.** Lightweight and packable.

*Since 2006, over 58,000 travellers have entrusted us with one of life's most significant journeys, a luxury safari.*



## SAFARI TRAVEL TIPS

# Layers, swimwear & packing tips

### CLOTHING

**Warm layers.** Sweater or fleece for chilly evenings. Gloves and scarf for winter trips.

**Swimwear.** If your lodge has a pool or you'll visit the beach.

**Trousers and shorts.** Breathable fabrics; consider the season.

### GENERAL PACKING TIPS

**Pack light.** Many lodges provide laundry services, so you can bring fewer clothes.

**Luggage restrictions.** Keep passport, visas and insurance details accessible.

### ENTERTAINMENT & EXTRAS

**Reading material.** A book or e-reader for downtime.

**Travel documents.** Passport, visas and insurance to hand.



SAFARI TRAVEL TIPS

## Day-pack packing list

**Water bottle.** Reusable and insulated to keep drinks cold; consider a hydration bladder for easy access.

**Snacks.** High-energy snacks like nuts, energy bars, dried fruit and jerky.

**Sun protection.** Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher), lip balm with SPF, sunglasses (UV protection), wide-brimmed hat or cap.

**Camera.** With extra batteries and memory cards.

**Binoculars.** For wildlife spotting.

**Phone and charger.** Optional power bank for extra battery life.

**Lightweight poncho or rain jacket.** In case of unpredictable weather.

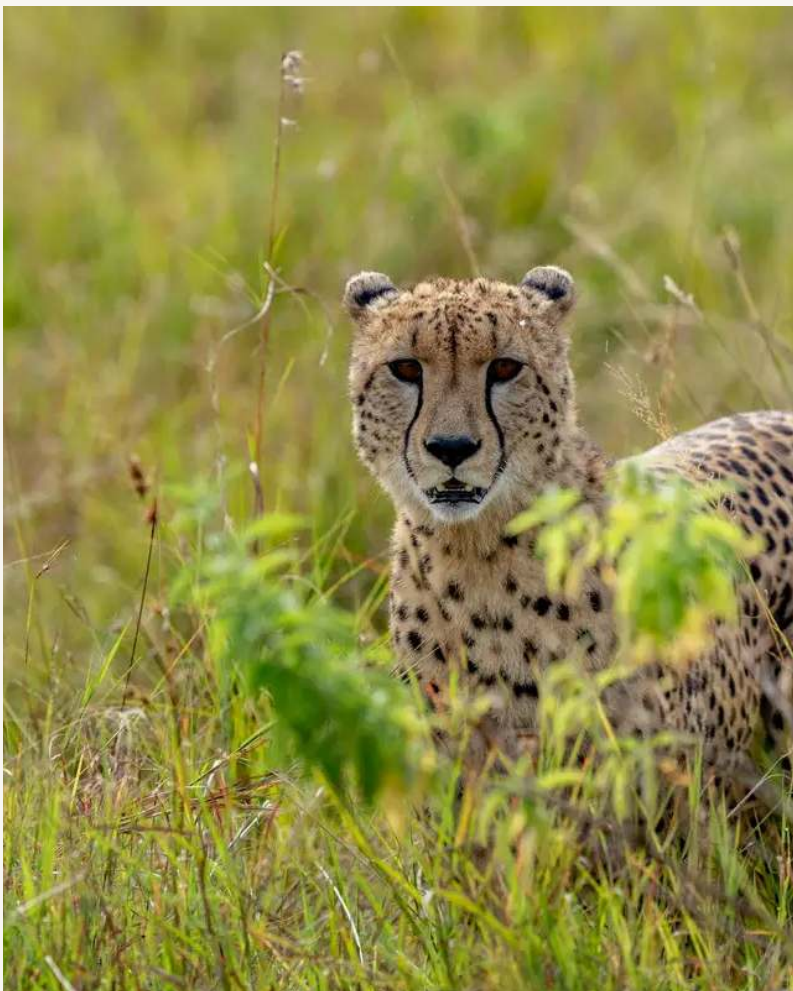
**Trash bags.** For packing out waste or storing wet items.

SAFARI TRAVEL TIPS

## Travel safety tips

**Keep documents secure.** Make copies of important documents (passport, ID, insurance) and store them separately.

**Use reliable transportation.** Opt for reputable taxi services or rideshare apps and avoid unlicensed taxis.



#### SAFARI TRAVEL TIPS

# Photography tips

#### AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHERS

A standard digital camera works well.

Bring extra batteries and memory cards (recharging may not be possible daily).

#### PROFESSIONAL / SEMI-PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

Use a dustproof case and monopod for stability.

Consider a private safari for fewer distractions.

Carry two camera bodies to avoid lens changes in dusty conditions.

The rainy season offers cleaner air and fewer tourists.

*Always ask permission before photographing people or sensitive areas and respect local customs. Let your guide assist with negotiations.*



IMPORTANT SAFARI NOTES

# Electricity, weather & climate

## ELECTRICITY

Some lodges have limited power, so charge devices in central areas and bring extra chargers and camera batteries.

## WEATHER & CLIMATE

East Africa's climate varies: coastal areas are humid with long rains (March to May) and short rains (October to December), while highlands are cooler and savannas are dry with wet seasons.

The dry season (June to October) is best for wildlife. Pack light clothes, a jacket for evenings, and a rain jacket if visiting during rainy season.



#### IMPORTANT SAFARI NOTES

## Roads & plastic bag ban

#### ROAD CONDITIONS, DISTANCES & VEHICLES

In East Africa, most roads are well-maintained tarred routes, but some dirt roads, especially in mountainous areas, can be rough and dusty.

For shorter travel times, consider charter flights — ask your Safari.com specialist for options and pricing. You'll travel in 4x4 Toyota Land Cruisers, designed for game viewing, seating 4–7 passengers.

#### BAN ON PLASTIC BAGS

Kenya and Tanzania have banned plastic carrier bags to combat pollution. Selling, manufacturing or possessing them is illegal, with fines or imprisonment for violations.

This move highlights both countries' commitment to sustainability and environmental protection.

## IMPORTANT SAFARI NOTES

# Children on safari

### Kid-friendly lodges

Many lodges cater to families with activities and amenities for kids.

### Ranger packs

Lodges provide educational packs to keep children engaged.

### Age restrictions

Children under 5 are usually not allowed on regular game drives for safety.

### Private game drives

Families can opt for private vehicles for shorter, kid-friendly drives.

### Travel requirements

**One parent.** An unabridged birth certificate and consent letter from the other parent are needed. **Guardians.** Guardians need affidavits from parents granting travel permission.

*A safari in Africa offers children a life-changing connection with nature and wildlife.*



SAFARI.COM INFO

# Do you have any questions?

Please don't hesitate to reach out. Our team of safari specialists are here to support you every step of the way. A safari specialist will be in touch within as little as 15 minutes during working hours.

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