



GENERAL INFORMATION BOTSWANA



BOTSWANA

Best time to visit Botswana is between April to September at the dry season. Please bare in mind that it is also the most expensive time. During the winter months the water comes from the Angolan highlands and there is lots of game to be seen at the fresh water holes. During those months it can be bitterly cold early in the morning and at night, and pleasant warm temperatures during the day.

The best places to explore in Botswana are as per our recommendations:

Central Kalahari Game Reserve
Chobe National Park
Kwando Reserve
Linyanti Reserve
Makgadikgadi Pans
Maun & Okavango Delta
Moremi Wildlife Reserve
Selinda Reserve
Tuli Block

Top 4 reasons why one should Go:

- The Okavango Delta - Drifting in a mokoro (canoe) through papyrus fringed and crystal clear waters or taking a walk among ancient trees.
- Big Game viewing and face-to-face experience, and there won't be hordes of other visitors blocking your view either
- Birding with over 900 species and many endemic that crowd the game reserves.
- Walking with the Bushmen in the dessert. Far from being lifeless but full of miracles. Watch them dance a dance as old as time.



Top 5 recommended Restaurants in Botswana:

- Chaplin's has the best food in Maun and known for its excellent Pizzas, fantastic burgers and great specials. Address: Nkwe Road, Maun
- French Connection is an alfresco restaurant with a French twist to its dishes. Their portions are generous and attracts locals and tourists over the weekends. Address: Mophane Ave, Maun
- Hilary's Coffee Shop is ideal to have a good cup of coffee and a quick snack between flights or before you depart on safari from Maun. The food is all home baked including the breakfast available. Address: Mathiba Road, Maun
- Motsana Cafe a the Gothic-looking Motsana centre offers freshly made sandwiches, mouthwatering pancakes, great milk shakes and other simple main dishes. While you wait for your food wander round the curio shops or make use of the free Wi-Fi. Address: Shorobe Road to Moremi, Maun
- Sports Bar and Restaurant is the liveliest one! You can eat great pizzas and spare ribs and on Friday nights they offer live music. Dance your heart out! You will need transport to get there because it is a bit out of town. Address: Sir Seretse Khama Road, Maun

CURRENCY:

On your way to Botswana? Make sure to bring along some Pula's. The national currency of Botswana.

Pula actually means rain in Setswana, because rain is very scarce in the land of the Kalahari dessert. The Pula was introduced in 1976 replacing the South African Rand. And it is one of the strongest and most stable currencies in Western Africa.

A cup of coffee in Botswana's capitalwill cost you about 100 Pula. A beer runs around 200 Pula and you can have a good meal at a local restaurant for around a 1000 Pula. A liter of Gasoline will cost you about 80 Pula.

ATM machines are found in larger towns/cities and do accept VISA & MasterCard credit cards. There are seven main commercial banks as well as a number of foreign exchange bureaux in Botswana where US Dollar, Euros, British Pound and South African Rand can be converted. Please note that in remote areas and petrol station only cash payments will be accepted. We therefore recommend to exchange some money before departure in your home country or at international airport/s.

Find out everything there is to know about the Pula here: [The Botswana Pula on Wikipedia](#)



DRIVING INFO:

Before heading off to your trip in Botswana we suggest to plan and prepare your trip carefully. Most remote areas are accessible only by 4x4 wheel drive where the petrol and food supply are limited or not available.

Our suggestion is to stock up your fridge and vehicle with all the food requirements, water at least 20 litres or more for desert area per person and approximate 100 litres of petrol (full tank or metal canister) at towns/cities to last for your next stay.

Please note often you will be driving on rough terrain or heavy sand, roads with lots of pot holes, crossing of wild animals and restricted speed limits which is different from what you are used to. In some cases a 100km can take with those road conditions up to 3 to 4 hours.

The speed limits on tarred roads is 120km/h and 60km/h in towns and villages. In National Parks drive below 40km/h due to the road conditions and wildlife. Please always stay on the established tracks to avoid getting stuck.

EMERGENCY NUMBER/S:

In the last 15 years of operating and selling holidays in Africa we fortunately did not experience any big emergency's. But just in case anything would happen please find some important info below.

Police emergency number: 999

Medical emergency number: 997

Fire emergency number: 998

Animal Rescue Centre:

SPCA, Gaborone, Tel: +267 820 111

Hospitals:

Francistown - Riverside Hospital, Baines Avenue, Francistown, Tel: +267 241 2518/6017

Gaborone - Life Gaborone Private Hospital, Mica Way, Gaborone, Tel: +267 368 5600/5765

Ghanzi - Ghanzi Hospital, Ghanzi, Tel: +267 659 6195

Kasane - Kasane Primary Hospital, White City, Presidential Raod, Kasane, Tel: +267 625 0333

Maun - Delta Medical Centre, Tsheko Tsheko Road, Maun, Tel: +267 686 1411

Selebi-Phikwe - Selebi-Phikwe Hospital, Selebi-Phikwe Village, Selebi-Phikwe, Tel: +267 261 0333



Police Stations:

Francistown - Central Police Station, Guy and Haskins Street, Tel: +267 241 2220/242 3009

Gaborone - Central Police Station, Botswana Road, Tel: +267 395 3189

Ghanzi - Ghanzi Police Station, Along Main Mall Road, Tel: +267 659 6225

Kasane - Kasane Police Station, Sir Seretse Khama Road, Tel: +267 686 0224

Nata - Nata Police Station, Francistown/Maun Road, Tel: +267 621 1223

Selebi Phikwe - Selebi-Phikwe Police Station, Tshekedi/Marakanelo Road, Tel: +267 261 0997

CREDIT CARD EMERGENCY NUMBER:

We suggest to keep the emergency number which is on the pack of your Credit Card separate in case the card gets lost or stolen so that you can contact your bank directly.

LANGUAGES / HOSPITALITY:

The official language in Botswana is “Setswana” and English is spoken widely.

Herewith a help with basic Setswama:

English	Setswana (Tswana)
Hello	Hi - Dumela
Welcome	O amogetswe (singular) Le amogetswe (plural)
How are you?	O kae?
I am fine	Ke teng
Goodbye	To those staying: Sala sentle / To those departing: Tsamaya sentle
Happy Birthday	Masego a Letsatsi la Matsalo
Thank you	Ke a leboga / Ke itumtese
You're welcome	O amogelesegile
North	Bokone
South	Borwa
East	Botlhabatsatsi
West	Bophirima

THE FOOD OF BOTSWANA:

The national dish of Botswana is called Seswaa. This consists of a meat stew served over thick polenta or pap. The stew is made by boiling meat with onion and pepper and served by vegetable such a wild spinach or pumpkin sauce. A large quantity of high-quality beef is raised in Botswana. Lamb, mutton, chicken and other meats are also plentiful, and fish are also part of Botswana cuisine.



Other local specialities:

Morama (an underground tuber).

The Kalahari truffle.

Mopane worms (grubs, served boiled, cooked or deep-fried).

Beans such as cow peas, ditloo (jugo beans) and letlhodi (china beans), dried bean leaves, plus nuts like peanuts and groundnuts

Morogo (wild spinach) is very tasty.

Regional drinks:

Palm wine (which is extremely strong) and Kgadi (made from distilled sugar or fungus).

Traditional beer such as bojalwa, which tastes a bit like apple cider.

Homemade ginger beer

Bush tea (or rooibos) is a reddish caffeine-free tea that is soothing and delicious, although something of an acquired taste.

SAFETY:

Where ever you travel your safety is of course always of our utmost concern. With over 15 years of travel experience in Africa we compiled some general tips below.

The campsites in the National Parks in Botswana as well as in game reserves are usually not fenced. You are asked to take necessary measures to ensure your safety.

- Only camp in designated campsites.
- Always sleep in your tent, roof tent or vehicle. Make sure your tent zips up well and door closed.
- Don't sleep with legs or arms protruding from the tent.
- Use rubbish receptacles at the campsites; if there are none, carry away all rubbish until you get to the next town.
- Cigarette butts should be well extinguished and placed in a rubbish bag and not thrown on the ground or into the bush.
- Make sure the campfire is well extinguished at the end of the evening, or after use, and cover it with sand or stones.
- Don't sleep on bridges or animal paths, particularly those of elephants and hippos.
- Bury all fecal matter and burn all toilet paper.
- Don't bathe or drink from still bodies of water; there is the danger of bilharzia. In the Okavango, don't swim in lagoons or streams; there is the danger of crocodiles and/or hippos.
- Children must be constantly supervised, never leave them alone in the campsite and never allow children to nap on the ground or in the open.
- Don't stray far from the campsite, or walk in the bush, unless with a qualified guide.



VISA REQUIREMENT/S/ AND BORDER POSTS:

To enter Botswana you need a passport that is valid at least for 6 months from date of entry.

PLEASE NOTE the Nationals who require a visa may obtain it from Botswana's various embassies and high commissions abroad. Herewith the list as follows:

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Andorra
- Angola
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Belarus
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Cape Verde
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- China
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Cote d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Djibouti
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Ethiopia
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Guatemala



- Guinea
- Guinea Bissau
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Hungary
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ivory Coast
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Korea DPR
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan (Kirghizia)
- Laos PDR
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Liberia
- Libya
- Lithuania
- Macedonia
- Mali
- Madagascar
- Marshall Islands
- Mauritania
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar (Burma)
- Nepal
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Panama
- Philippines
- Poland
- Qatar
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Somalia



- Sudan
- Suriname
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- Togo
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- Uzbekistan
- Vietnam
- Yemen

For our self-drive tourists the most used border posts into Botswana are:

Namibia / Botswana:

Mohembo

P O Box 197, Shakawe

Tel: +267 687 5505

Fax: +267 687 5524

Opening hours: 06h00 – 18h00

Mamuno

P O Box 69, Charles Hill

Tel: +267 659 2013

Fax: +267 659 2271

Opening hours: 07h00 – 00h00

Ngoma

P O Box 346, Kasane

Tel: +267 620 0050

Opening hours: 07h00 – 18h00

South Africa / Botswana:

Martin's Drift

P O Box 100, Sherwood

Tel: +267 491 5907 /5913

Fax: +267 491 5905

Opening hours: 06h00 – 22h00

PLEASE NOTE as from the 1st July 2015 visitors entering SA travelling with kids require an unabridged birth certificate to enter the country.

No passenger will therefore be allowed to travel without these papers - be it by land, sea or air.



For more detailed info on the minor travel/immigration regulations, please visit - www.dha.gov.za

HEALTH / INSURANCE:

Botswana is a Malaria risk area especially during the rainy months and therefore we recommend that all travelers consult their medical practitioner or an institute of tropical medicine for oral medications. Always use mosquito repellent, wear long pants, long sleeved shirts at night, closed shoes and always sleep under a mosquito net.

A Medical and Travel insurance is highly recommended prior to the start of the holiday.

WHAT TO PACK:

In the summer months, between October and April, it is very hot and recommended clothing items during the day are shorts and a T-shirt. Choose clothes of dull and/or neutral colours and if you sunburn easily wear a long sleeve top.

In the evenings, when mosquitoes are likely to be looking for blood, wear a long-sleeved shirt and long pants.

Herewith a suggested packing list:

- khaki cotton pants
- pairs of sturdy short
- skirt or dress slacks for hotel evenings (optional)
- short-sleeved t-shirts
- long sleeved shirts (for sun protection as well as warmth)
- light sweater or sweatshirt
- lightweight raincoat/windbreaker or a waterproof poncho
- a pair of worn-in walking shoes or trainers/sneakers1 pair of sandals or rubber thongs (for showers and boating)
- Underwear
- swimming suit
- bandannas or handkerchiefs (many uses!)
- hat with a broad brim (a baseball cap does not cover your neck and ears!)

Between May and September the weather is dry and relatively cool. During the daytime you will be comfortable wearing T-shirts and short sleeves for most of the day. Keep in mind that early mornings and evenings can be very cold. Layers are the most practical for the fluctuating day/night temperatures.

Add for the cooler months:

- Track suit (also good to sleep in)
- Extra sweater, flees or/and jacket



Bear in mind that packing space is limited on all modes of safari transport (including 4x4 vehicle and small aircrafts) so you will need to restrict your baggage to 12-15 kg (preferably packed in a soft bag) plus a reasonable amount of camera equipment. You will be allowed two separate pieces of luggage on safari.

Please don't forget to pack in: malaria medication (consult your local physician for specifics), headache tablets, diarrhea tablets, rehydrate, plasters, antiseptic cream, antihistamine (tablets and cream) and sun cream

For game drives aim for reasonable neutral colours – think of the movie “Out of Africa”. A windbreaker or hoddie is ideal too. For evening we suggest something more formal at more up market and exclusive lodges/hotels. **DO NOT FORGET** the binoculars for the game viewing!

camping
africa