

📍 Botswana Wildlife

Trip Notes: Botswana

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Travelers arriving in Africa are required to have passports that will be valid for at least six months from the date of departure and contain at least three blank pages per country to be visited for affixing entry and exit stamps.

US citizens do not require a visa for entry into Botswana; an entry permit will be processed on arrival.

CURRENCY

The currency in Botswana is the Pula (P). Any cash payments made to camps for souvenirs, or gratuities to guides or staff, need to be in Pula, US Dollars, or South African Rand.

When using USD bills, they must be clean and in excellent shape, and issued after 2008. Your bank will be familiar with this request if you explain that the notes are for use overseas.

CREDIT CARDS

Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted at camps and lodges, American Express less so.

TIPPING

Service staff in Africa depend on tips as part of their livelihood. As a guideline, hotel porters get about \$1 per bag carried each way. City restaurant staff are tipped \$1 per person per meal. Bar waiters at 10% - 15% value of the beverages purchased. Airport transfer drivers at \$2 per person per transfer. Camp and lodge staff at \$10 per person per day in camp to be split between the entire camp crew – there is often a Tips box for this group tip in the main area of the camp or lodge. Driver-guides are with you the most and should receive \$10 - \$15 per person per day. If you have both a driver and a guide, the driver should receive \$5 per person per day.

SHOPPING & VAT

Shopping in Botswana offers a wonderful opportunity to discover locally made arts and crafts. Look for handwoven baskets, colourful textiles, pottery, jewellery and traditional wood carvings, particularly in markets and community-run craft centres. Botswana's distinctive baskets, created by skilled artisans using natural fibers and dyes, make beautiful and authentic souvenirs while supporting local communities.

Value-Added Tax (VAT) in Botswana is a consumption tax administered by the Botswana Unified Revenue Service at a standard rate of 14%.



Savanna



Chobe River



Chobe National Park

BAGGAGE

Airlines into and out of Zimbabwe routinely weigh both checked and carry-on bags. To avoid paying excess baggage fees, please adhere to your airline's restrictions. Important rules for shared in-country air transfers in light aircraft, to and from game camps/lodges.

There is a weight allowance of 20kg (44 lbs) per person, including hand luggage, which must be in soft bags. Note that one flat/hard side is allowed, but the majority of the bag needs to be soft. The maximum dimensions are 27.5 inches (70cm) x 13.8 inches (35cm) x 11.8 inches (30cm). Wheels are only allowed if they are not part of a solid frame or rigid structure.

VACCINATIONS

All travelers to Botswana should consult a travel clinic at least 6 weeks before departure for advice as to the recommended medications and vaccinations for their safari, based on their itinerary and personal health profile.

Malaria is present in Botswana, especially in the north. Although malaria medication is not required for entry to Botswana, your travel clinician may recommend it.

Yellow fever vaccination is not required for travelers arriving from the US or South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia or Namibia into Botswana. Travelers entering Botswana from countries where yellow fever is present, such as Rwanda, Uganda and most West and Central African countries, must have certification of yellow fever vaccination, or a

waiver document provided by their physician citing the waiver reason.

Travelers who are in airport transit for less than 12 hours are not required to have yellow fever vaccinations. If in doubt, please ask your Travel Clinician to review your itinerary and advise.

LANGUAGE

Botswana has two main languages: English, the official language used for business and government, and Setswana, the national language spoken by most of the population. Over 20 other minority and indigenous languages are also spoken across the country.

TIME DIFFERENCE

Botswana is on Central Africa Time which is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time and 9 hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time.

PHONES

To dial Botswana from the US: 011 + 267 + number

To dial the US from Botswana: 00 + 1 + area code + number.

POWER

Africa uses 240 volt electric current. Many Botswana camps are situated in remote areas and generate their own electricity. Guests should bring 3 prong round, 3 prong square, or 2 prong round and 2 prong flat plug adaptors. It is not possible to use appliances such as hairdryers or electric shavers in the tented rooms at most of the camps in Botswana as they have low wattage fuses which will trip. For detailed information, images and links to purchase adaptors, please consult <https://www.power-plugs-sockets.com>.



📍 Okavango Delta



📍 Zebra



📍 Okavango Delta

SAFETY & SECURITY

Always use the safe in your room to store cash, important documents and other valuables. Larger items can be left in the lodge or camp safe at the front desk.

During a game drive, the driver-guide will offer instructions concerning safety. This includes advising tour members when it is safe to exit the vehicle. At lodges and camps, the staff will often escort guests to and from the rooms to ensure safety. In National Parks, guests must be back in the lodge or camp by 6pm; this Park rule will be enforced by your driver/guide.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Dial 999 for police, 998 Fire Brigade and 997 for Ambulance.

CLIMATE

Botswana has a semi-arid, subtropical climate featuring hot summers, cool and dry winters, and erratic rainfall. Weather patterns vary significantly between the arid dry season and the wet summer season.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

For a trip to Botswana, pack lightweight, neutral-colored layers (khaki, beige, green), a warm fleece or jacket for chilly mornings, comfortable closed-toe walking shoes, sun protection, insect repellent, and a soft-sided luggage bag limited to 20kg (44 lbs) due to small bush plane restrictions. Avoid dark/white colors and camouflage, which is illegal.

ETIQUETTE

Etiquette in Botswana centers on Botho, a cultural concept of mutual respect, human dignity, and community.

Always greet people warmly before starting any interaction by saying "Dumela Rra" to men or "Dumela Mma" to women, use your right hand to give or receive items, and dress modestly.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

1 January - **New Year's Day (Observed 2 January)**
26 March - **Good Friday**
29 March - **Easter Monday**
18 April - **Independence Day**
1 May - **Labor Day**
6 May - **Ascension Day**
1 July - **Sir Seretse Khama Day**
19 July - **President's Day (Observed 20 July)**
30 September - **Botswana Day (Observed 1 October)**
25 December - **Christmas Day**
26-27 December - **Boxing Day**

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

[US State Department Travel Advisories](#)

[U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Botswana](#)

[Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#)

[US Passports](#)

[International Travel Guidance](#)

This information is provided by Travel Answers as a guideline to the country you will be visiting. Further information is available to you at <https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories/botswana.html>. While Travel Answers endeavors to provide current information, regulations and requirements can change without notice and we are not responsible for travelers whose trips are interrupted due to documentary or medical non-compliance.