

Trip Notes: Tanzania

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

U.S. citizens need a visa for Tanzania, obtainable online (e-visa) or upon arrival, requiring a passport valid for 6+ months, return/onward ticket, and funds, with a 1-year multiple-entry tourist visa costing \$100; Yellow Fever proof is needed if coming from an endemic country, plus standard health forms/tests may apply.

Visas can be acquired on arrival into Tanzania, however, it may take up to two hours to complete, and is not recommended. Entry visa fees are always payable in US dollars cash when purchased on arrival.

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

It is strongly recommended that all travelers to Tanzania apply for [e-visas in advance, online](#).

We suggest you complete this at least 4 weeks before departure as it does take up to 10 business days to process e-visas. A multi- entry visa is issued to US citizens and costs USD \$100.00 (subject to change without notice).

Travelers arriving in Tanzania from, or via, Uganda, and all those traveling to or from Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania, must complete a pre-arrival document at <https://afyamsafiri.moh.go.tz/#/>. This document must be completed no more than 24 hours before arrival.

ZANZIBAR

Travelers visiting Zanzibar are required to purchase mandatory evacuation insurance whether or not they have purchased a general travel insurance policy. Travelers must access the website <https://www.visitzanzibar.go.tz> and purchase insurance for each member of their party. A QR code will be issued as proof of coverage and is required to enter Zanzibar. Policies cannot be purchased on arrival.

CURRENCY

The currency of Tanzania is the Tanzania shilling (TZS). Some restaurants and shops in tourist areas may accept payment in US\$. Tanzania is primarily a cash economy. Please do not rely on credit cards other than as a back-up.

CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards are accepted at major hotels and restaurants, but a 5-10% surcharge will usually be added. There are very few ATMs in Tanzania. Money is issued only in local currency from ATMs.

CLIMATE

Tanzania has a tropical climate with variations based on altitude, featuring hot, humid coasts and cooler, drier highlands.



Prison Island, Zanzibar



Mount Kilimanjaro



The Rock Restaurant, Zanzibar

Tanzania is generally warm year-round but with distinct wet and dry seasons (long rains: April-June; short rains: Nov-Dec) and cooler, drier months (June-Oct). Altitude significantly affects temperature, with Mount Kilimanjaro experiencing frost, while the central plateau is arid and lowlands are tropical.

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.

VACCINATIONS

All travelers to Tanzania should visit a travel clinic at least 6 weeks before departure for personalized advice on medications and vaccinations based on their itinerary, health profile, and current destination requirements.

Malaria is present in Tanzania; while medication is not required for entry, your clinician may recommend it.

Yellow fever vaccination is not required for travelers arriving directly from the U.S., but vaccination or a physician-issued exemption letter is recommended. Travelers arriving from or visiting yellow-fever-risk countries (including Kenya) must carry proof of vaccination or a waiver document provided by their physician citing the waiver reason.

Travelers who are only in airport transit are not required to have yellow fever vaccinations.

SHOPPING & VAT

Shopping in Tanzania offers vibrant local markets for crafts, textiles, spices, and unique souvenirs like Tingatinga paintings and Maasai beadwork, alongside modern malls in cities like Dar es Salaam for international goods, with Zanzibar famous for spices and carved chests; look for Tanzanite gemstones with a certificate, and consider fair-trade cooperatives like Shanga in Arusha for handmade goods, contributing directly to local economies.

Tanzania has a Value Added Tax (VAT) system, with a standard rate of 18% in Mainland Tanzania and 15% in Zanzibar, applying to most goods and imported services, though recent changes introduced a temporary 16% rate for certain B2C electronic payments, while essential items like unprocessed food and some health/education services are exempt.

LANGUAGE

Tanzania has two official languages, Swahili (Kiswahili) and English, with Swahili serving as the widely spoken national language and lingua franca, while English is used in higher education, government, and business. Over 100 indigenous languages are also spoken, but Swahili connects most Tanzanians, allowing easy communication, especially with tourists who can often get by with English or basic Swahili phrases.



📍 Masai Mara



📍 Giraffe, Serengeti



📍 African Elephants

TIME DIFFERENCE

Tanzania is 8 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time and 11 hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time.

PHONES

To dial Tanzania from the US: 011 + 255 + number

To dial the US from Tanzania: 000 + 1 + area code + number.

POWER

Tanzania uses Type D & G sockets, standard voltage of 230V, and 50Hz frequency, requiring travel adapters for most visitors, with surge protectors recommended due to potential supply irregularities. The power generation mix heavily relies on natural gas (around 70%), supplemented by hydropower, oil, and growing solar/biofuel inputs, though clean cooking remains a major focus for reducing deforestation.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Tanzania is generally stable but carries risks of violent crime (robbery, assault), terrorism (especially Mtwara), civil unrest, and specific dangers for LGBTQ+ individuals, requiring a high degree of caution; stay aware in tourist areas like Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, and near Mozambique, avoid showing valuables, use reputable transport, and always follow expert guidance, especially on safaris or climbing Kilimanjaro.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Dial 999 for police, ambulance, or fire.

BAGGAGE

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.

Maximum dimensions 35.5 inches (90cm) x 25.5 inches (65cm) x 13.7 inches (35cm). Wheels are only allowed if they are not part of a solid frame or rigid structure.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

For a Tanzania trip, pack neutral, lightweight clothing (long sleeves/pants for sun/bugs), a warm jacket for cool mornings/evenings, sturdy closed-toe shoes for walking, a sun hat, sunglasses, and a scarf/buff for dust; essentials also include binoculars, camera, adapter, power bank, sunscreen, insect repellent, hand sanitizer, personal meds, and a soft-sided duffel bag for smaller planes.



Ballooning over Serengeti

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

1 January - **New Year's Day**
12 January - **Zanzibar Revolution Day**
20 March - **Eid el Fitri (tentative date)**
21 March - **Eid el Fitri Holiday (tentative date)**
03 April - **Good Friday**
06 April - **Easter Monday**
7 April - **Karume Day**
26 April - **Union Day**
1 May - **Labour Day**
27 May - **Eid al-Adha (tentative date)**
7 July - **Saba Saba**
8 August - **Farmers' Day**
26 August - **Maulid (tentative date)**
14 October - **Mwalimu Nyerere Day**
25 December - **Christmas Day**
26 December - **Boxing Day**

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

US State Department Travel Advisories

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>

U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Tanzania

<https://tz.usembassy.gov/>

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

<https://step.state.gov>

US Passports

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>

International Travel Guidance

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

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/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Tanzania.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.

AFRICA



ASIA



EUROPE



SOUTH PACIFIC



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