

General Safari Information

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A Normal Day at a Luxury South African Game Park

Morning

At 5:30 to 6.00 am, you will get the wake-up call to get ready for your morning drive. Yes, it is early but the anticipation of seeing the animals makes this easier than you would anticipate. After breakfast, you head out on your morning game drive. The game drives can last for about two to three hours depending on the passengers in the vehicle, what you see and how long you wish to stay out.



Lunch and the afternoon

These are lazy times after lunch with normally a little nap in the afternoon, or a splash in your private splash pool, read a book on your verandah, or a visit to the spa. Perhaps visit a local village or browse in the camp store.

Afternoon Tea

At 4:00 pm, you can meet in the lodge and enjoy an English Tea complete with the necessary snacks before heading out with your guide and jeep companions for the afternoon drive.



Dinner

You can go straight to the bar on your return or if you wish to your room to freshen up. Once ready you call and a guide comes to escort you from your room to the lodge for dinner. Although it is safe to walk around during the day, the animals are more active at night and they will not allow you walk around after dark without a guide.



Whether a dinner in the restaurant, or under the stars in the BOMA you will be treated to a delectable relaxed dinner before retiring to look forward to the next day's adventures.

Climate for South Africa | The Best Time to Visit

The climate is mild throughout South Africa. The seasons are reversed from the Northern Hemisphere. It can snow between June and August, in the mountain areas, but there is only one ski facility, which is outside Rhodes in the Eastern Cape.

It generally rains in the afternoon during the austral summer (winter in the northern hemisphere) everywhere in the country, except in the Western Cape Province, where it rains during winter.

Climate as it relates to the Game Parks in South Africa in the interior Kruger Park and surrounding areas

April to October

These are the winter months. This is good for game viewing as the lack of water causes the animals to gather around the remaining water pools making them easier to find. Also, the shorter grass and absence of thick foliage makes the animals easier to spot. This is good time temperature wise as well and of course there is less rain.

November to March

These are the summer months. More rain falls with late afternoon thundershowers. It is hotter in the bush. The bush greens up with bright foliage and lush vegetation. However, this thick bush makes the animals harder to see. This is also the time when antelopes give birth and the tiny babies are wonderful to view.

Whale Watching

The main season for viewing whales is between June and October when they arrive to breed and calve in the bays providing some of the best whale watching in the world.

September thru April

This is the best to time to visit Cape Town. During the rest of the year, it is usually quite cool, often with rain/wind/fog conditions (too cold to lie on the beach). In the coastal belt of the Easter Cape (including the Cape Peninsula and Garden Route), summer days are dry and sunny with most of the rain falling in winter.

Johannesburg at 5700 feet above sea level can be quite cool in the winter. Coats are needed for Johannesburg, as well as for other high elevations. Sweaters are advisable for evenings everywhere else (windbreakers for evening game-reserve drives in the winter).

The following are average rainfall amounts and temperatures:

CAPE TOWN

Month	Precipitation (inches)	Temperature (degrees F) LOW	Temperature (degrees F) HIGH
JANUARY	0.6	60	78
FEBRUARY	0.3	60	79
MARCH	0.7	58	77
APRIL	1.9	53	72
MAY	3.1	49	67
JUNE	3.3	46	65
JULY	3.5	45	63
AUGUST	2.6	46	64
SEPTEMBER	1.7	49	65
OCTOBER	1.2	52	70
NOVEMBER	0.7	55	73
DECEMBER	0.04	58	76

JOHANNESBURG

Month	Precipitation (inches)	Temperature (degrees F) LOW	Temperature (degrees F) HIGH
JANUARY	4.5	58	78
FEBRUARY	4.3	58	77
MARCH	3.5	55	75
APRIL	1.5	50	72
MAY	1	43	66
JUNE	0.3	39	62
JULY	0.3	39	63
AUGUST	0.3	43	68
SEPTEMBER	0.9	48	73
OCTOBER	2.2	53	77
NOVEMBER	4.2	55	77

DECEMBER

4.9

57

78

DURBAN

Month	Precipitation	Temperature	Temperature
	(inches)	(degrees F)	(degrees F)
		LOW	HIGH
JANUARY	4.3	69	81
FEBRUARY	4.8	69	81
MARCH	5.1	68	80
APRIL	3	64	78
MAY	2	57	75
JUNE	1.3	53	73
JULY	1.1	52	72
AUGUST	1.5	55	72
SEPTEMBER	2.8	59	73
OCTOBER	4.3	62	75
NOVEMBER	4.8	65	77

Customizing Your Safari

It is very easy to do. These are our guidelines.

When do you want to travel? What do you want to see and where do you want to go? How much time you want to spend in Africa and your budget are the most important factors in planning a custom itinerary?

First select the time of year and how long you wish to travel. To help you plan your trip, please reference [page 2](#) for the best times to visit South Africa and Botswana.

BUDGET - The most important factor in planning

Budget is the most important factor in planning and there must be a clear understanding of your budget between your Keene Luxury Travel Consultant and the person planning a custom itinerary. It can be a very time-consuming process if the budget amount is not clearly defined from the very beginning. The cost of a trip varies tremendously with the type of hotels and camp accommodations you select. We will plan the best possible vacation with the best properties and itinerary for your budget amount. It makes no sense to try plan a trip without the basic guideline that everyone is concerned about – “how much will this cost?”. A basic guideline for a safari with nice properties including Cape Town and one or two safari camps your cost will be around \$800 to \$1200 per person, per day. For the 5-star properties, the cost will be around \$1300 to \$2000+ per person, per day. This includes all your transfers and internal flights. If you look at the pre-planned itineraries section and read what is included in the itineraries this will give you a good idea of your expected cost. All custom plans must start with a budget.

South African Safaris - minimum of 3-days on safari - two different lodges for 5 - 6 days or three different lodges for 9 days.

Safaris in South Africa feature luxury lodges with luxurious accommodations with air conditioning and all the trimmings. Game drives are exceptional particularly in the private reserves bordering Kruger National Park. Big five are prevalent in South Africa the chances are you will see them all. Leopard, Lion, Elephant, Rhino and Cape Buffalo.

Botswana Safaris - minimum of 3-days on safari - two different lodges for 5 - 6 days is best or three different lodges for 9 days.

Botswana safaris feature tented camps - usually without air conditioning. The Okavango Delta is rich with wildlife and has a unique topography - palm trees, canoe and boat rides. Elephants with palm trees! Remember that tented camps have limitations. In some you cannot use a hairdryer, for instance, even at Mombo which is highly rated camp.

South Africa

I strongly suggest you spend some time in Cape Town. This is a marvelous city with spectacular scenery. If you are interested in the wine and enjoy staying in a country environment among the vineyards Constantia offers wonderful properties among the vineyards about 15 minutes from down town Cape Town. Also, a day trip or some time to the Wine Country area with the quaint villages of Paarl and Stellenbosch, and wonderful vineyards will be a wonderful experience. A day trip to Cape Point is a wonderful way to see the Cape and the different areas of Cape Town. Time spent on the coast around Hermanus is also a nice thing to do - particularly in whale season- June to November.

Short overview of properties in the Cape Town area

We all like different types of hotels. Pick what suits your style. I strongly suggest staying in the Waterfront area. Spend a minimum of 3 - 4 days in the Cape Town area. Big luxury hotels, Table Bay and the ONE and ONLY have all the amenities you would expect from large luxury hotels. The Radisson Hotel offers a good value and a shuttle to the waterfront and is a good place to stay right on the water for a main stream hotel.

Medium sized boutique hotels many consider the finest in Cape Town is the SILO. A newer hotel set right in the waterfront and part of the exclusive Royal Portfolio. Cape Grace is also in the Waterfront and a classic hotel. A smaller property high above the town in Bantry Bay with incredible views is Ellerman House. Rooms range from huge, medium and small as each room is unique and different. Two luxury bed and breakfast property. Bishops Court and The Constantia are luxury B&B's I would recommend for those who enjoy bed and breakfast properties and want excellent value for their money.

Constantia properties - gracious properties in historic buildings in the vineyards offer a unique experience. Steenberg Hotel and Cellars Hohenort.

The Royal Portfolio – The Silo in the waterfront, Birkenhead House in Hermanus (one hour from Cape Town on the ocean) and La Residence (one hour from Cape Town (in the wine country) are all stunning hotels. Special packages are available when you combine the three hotels.

The Wine Country area offers a wonderful retreat. Vineyards, mountains, and quaint townships it has it all. There are many outstanding properties here we recommend two. La Residence is a small gem, very personal in an exceptional private residential location with a lake complete with swans and surrounded by a private vineyard. Winelands Hotel - Sante Wellness Center is a spa lovers paradise, it must be seen to be believed. The hotel is new, gorgeous very modern with luxurious large rooms and surrounded by vineyards.

Kruger National Park - Game lodges in private Sabi Sand reserve bordering Kruger - All with air-conditioned rooms

The highest rated properties are the Singita lodges. Boulders and Ebony and Lebombo and Sweni. Truly amazing with huge villas. Fabulous area for the game drives. Right next door is Leopard Hills. A gem. Drives basically the same area as Singita and the is a very personal and

luxurious property. Lion Sands Ivory Lodge is another fabulous lodge that offer the incredible luxury and privacy. South Africa has luxurious properties with air conditioning. Mala Mala not quite as upscale as those mentioned above but Mala Mala has some of the best game in the area due to huge frontage to the Sand River which attracts animals.

Other areas in South Africa for game parks - Thornybush, Timbavati, and Kapana Game reserves - All with air-conditioned rooms

Thornybush reserve has Royal Malewane. An extremely luxurious experience. The rooms and staff are amazing, the land you drive is not as diverse as the game reserves around Kruger but you do have some wonderful game drives with close up encounters. Kings Camp is also a very reasonably priced camp with excellent leopard opportunities. Camp Jabulani is a property where you can ride elephants on safari. Eagles Crag in Shamwari is in a Malaria Free area and if this is important to you this is a wonderful property.

Malaria free areas in South Africa for game parks - Madikwe and Shamwari - All with air-conditioned rooms

Madikwe Game Reserve is on the South African - Botswana border. There are two wonderful game lodges here, Mateya and Madikwe Hills. Jamala is another option with just five rooms and the most active waterhole I have ever seen. The elevation of the area means no malaria carrying mosquitoes. Shamwari is an hour out of Port Elizabeth on the garden route and is a private game reserve that features five different camps. Shamwari is in a Malaria Free area and if this is important to you this is a wonderful property.

Other areas of South Africa

South Africa has a lot more to offer than I mention here. This is just the prime areas and properties that most people visit in South Africa. Another very popular area is the Garden Route. Plettenberg Hotel is located in this area and is wonderful, particularly when the whales are right off the coast in July to October.

Botswana Safaris and Properties - most Botswana properties do not feature air conditioning

I recommend the Okavango Delta area. This is a diverse area, wildlife abounds. Botswana is primarily tented camps. Ladies you cannot use a hair dryer. The most luxurious is Mombo, incredible tents and wildlife. Khawai River Lodge, and the other Orient Express camps of Savute Elephant Camp and Eagle Island Camp are the only ones with air conditioning. Jao - very zen-like and peaceful. Shinde and Kanana are less luxurious but have incredible game and birding and boating options.

Victoria Falls - 2-nights is ample to see Victoria Falls

Most people want to visit Victoria Falls while they are in Southern Africa. The falls are more spectacular on the Zambian side after the rains in early in the year and more spectacular on the Zimbabwe side later in the year. Right at the falls are two hotels. Royal Livingstone is on the Zambian side. A new large luxury hotel with all the amenities you would expect. On the Zimbabwe side is Victoria Falls Hotel. Old and with a long history the grounds and main rooms are full of character the guest rooms are acceptable but not luxurious. Stanley and Livingstone is a great property. Each room is a cottage with living room and bedroom. Located on the hill above a private game reserve the location is perfect. About 15 minutes from the Falls. Game drives and all meals are an option. It can be booked bed and breakfast, full board (all meals) or fully inclusive.

Then simply decide and let us make it happen for you

Call us if you want more information or details. Once you select when and where you wish to go, we can make all the arrangements for transfers, flights, tours and be sure that your trip to Africa is as perfect as possible. We will get you pricing and then you can make a decision. Remember the price drops if there are more than two people traveling so four friends traveling at the same time can offer savings. It is best for you to be sure that you have the itinerary as you wish it to be before we price. ONLY ONE pricing will be done complimentary then a \$350 custom planning fee must be paid for any changes. This is a one-time \$350 that will be applied to the deposit for the safari. It takes a lot of time to check availability and price safaris and tours. Please understand that we must charge this custom additional pricing and service and if you book the \$350 comes back to you 100%.

Want properties not on our selected list?

No problem. We will be happy to book and include in your trip any properties you wish to visit. Our goal here is to sort through the maze of properties to offer what we consider to be the best choices. There are hundreds of good properties in Southern Africa and we are happy to accommodate your needs.

How much extra does it cost to use your services?

Of course, Ker & Downey and Keene Luxury Travel make money from booking your safari. However, it is often a better value for you than doing all the work yourself. Working with a tour company like Ker & Downey who are specialists in South Africa they receive reductions on rates due to the volume of business. You will normally pay the same amount you would if you booked all this directly with the camps, hotels, airlines etc. Plus, you have the added advantage of transfers, flight arrangements everything is taken care of for you. The profit for the tour company and our commission is in the savings a good tour operator is able to negotiate.

If we travel alone, how do we get from property to property - shouldn't we be in a group?

You will be surprised how seamless this will be. You will be met every step of the way by a "meet and greet service". At the airport upon arrival, you will be met and be transferred to the hotel. For all tours, you will be picked-up and then returned to the hotel. You will be picked up at your hotel and delivered to the airport and met at the other end by a Ker & Downey representative or a Lodge representative. Each lodge will meet you and take care of you. In essence you will be met and assisted by a "meet and greet" person at the airport or a property representative every step of the way. It will be the same experience as being in a group with all the assistance you would expect. Ker & Downey headquarters are in the US but they have offices in South Africa. You have a number you can call 24 hours for assistance. You can even set up additional tours if you like while staying at a property.

Want to reduce your costs? Travel with friends

It costs less per person when 4 people travel together. The savings add up as the number of people traveling together increases. Consider asking friends to join you so you can all receive savings.

Clothing and Baggage for Safaris

BAGGAGE LIMITS

Weight limits apply on domestic African flights of 44lbs. If you are traveling on a flight into a game park your luggage could be restricted to either 33lbs or even 26lbs.



This can be a very difficult matter to address. It is important that you plan carefully to avoid extra charges and/or disappointment. Most USA originating international flights permit 2 pieces of baggage weighing up to 70 lbs. to be checked.

However, domestic flights within South Africa permit you to check **only one bag** weighing up to **44 pounds**. Air Link flights restrict passengers to one bag weighing **33 pounds**. Air Link is the carrier that serves the Kruger National Park area airports from Johannesburg. This would be the weight limit on a charter flight from Johannesburg to South African Game parks. Federal Air allows 44lbs. However, some smaller planes restrict the weight to 26lbs so it will depend on your itinerary. The flights to the game parks ask for "soft sided" luggage this means duffle bags. One will be provided for you when you receive your tickets and information.

Excess baggage may result in additional charges, if it can be carried at all. Plan on leaving large suitcases at hotels to which you are returning or at the airport. The Intercontinental in Johannesburg will store our luggage for a fee that is arranged when you leave the luggage.

DO the following:

- Pack light, most of the safari properties that Ker & Downey utilize provides daily laundry service.
- Pack shoes that are light. Most safari's include light activities.
- Put small items, socks, underwear, and belts inside shoes to maximize space. If your shoes are dirty, cover them in plastic bags to keep the rest of your items from getting soiled.
- Take smaller bottles of after-shave, shampoo, toothpaste, pills, and lotions.
- Double pack toiletries in leak-proof plastic bags.
- Take a carry-on (a back pack is preferred) and include such items as medications, reading glasses, books, a sweater.
- Be sure your name is included on each checked bag.
- Take a supply of plastic "locks". See "Information from the TSA" below.

DO NOT do the following:

- Do not take expensive jewelry.
- Do not over pack. Light aircraft have limited space with relatively small openings for bag storage.
- Do not pack undeveloped film in your checked bags. TSA screening equipment may damage the film. Take all film out of canisters and put into clear plastic bags. High-speed film (800 ASA and up) should be hand checked and not allowed to go through the carry-on screening equipment.

If you check your bag:

- Write your name, destination and home address inside the bag.
- Remove straps and hooks from bags to prevent them from getting caught in the baggage system.
- If you want to complain about baggage, an airline, service or refunds, write: Aviation Consumer Protection Division, US Dept of Transportation, 400 7th St SW, Room 4107, Washington DC 20590.

CLOTHING

Southern Africa's climate is varied both geographically and by season. You must plan accordingly. Also, certain elements of your tour might require a specific type of clothing, or dictate a dress code. We recommend packing lighter weight clothing that can be worn in layers. **Do not overpack.** Laundry is done daily while you are in game lodges and almost all hotels have a laundry service available.

Mostly, you will want lightweight clothes. Cotton and cotton/synthetic mixtures are most comfortable. Dress mainly for outdoor comfort. A cotton bush jacket or golf jacket with pockets

is a good idea. You might want to take two sets of lightweight outer clothing for travel and game viewing, so that you can wear one while the other is being laundered.

In the summer months, lightweight clothing made of natural fabrics is recommended with one warm sweater or jacket for cooler evening temperatures. In winter, warmer clothing is suggested, especially for evenings. During the months of June, July, and August, gloves, a scarf, and a hooded warm-up jacket may be necessary at higher elevations.

In major South African cities, hotels and restaurants require "smart casual" dress. This is generally defined as jacket and tie for men and better (though not formal) dress for ladies. (NOTE: Those traveling on Rovos Rail and the Blue Train need to observe this code.) Denim is not acceptable in better establishments in the evening.

Safari can be dusty, and while game viewing, tan, khaki and other neutral colors are most practical. You will want an informal change of clothes for dinner at the end of the day. In the austral winter you will need a wool sweater or jacket when game viewing in the early morning hours and when out of doors in the evening. This is a must. Bring a hat for sun protection, especially to wear in the vehicles while driving in the parks, as the tops are left open for game viewing and photography. Generally, you will not need heavy footwear unless you plan to do much walking. A pair of comfortable walking shoes, tennis shoes or desert boots will do. A change of shoes at the end of the day is pleasant; therefore, an extra pair of lightweight shoes (low-heeled for ladies) is recommended for evenings at the lodges. In the evening, the dress is very relaxed. A pair of slacks and an open necked shirt for the men and slacks and blouse for the ladies works well. Carry lightweight sleepwear, as blankets are readily available.

PACKING CHECKLIST

CLOTHING

- 3 pairs of lightweight jeans or slacks
- 1 pair of walking shoes, tennis shoes, lightweight hiking boots
- 1 sweater for evenings and early mornings
- 1 wind-breaker or bush jacket
- 6 shirts; 3 short sleeve and 3 long sleeve
- underclothing
- pajamas or sweat suit
- 5 pair socks including 2 pair of knee length cotton socks or stockings
- 1 swimsuit
- 1 cotton hat
- 1 lightweight bathrobe
- 1 pair slippers
- 1 lightweight rain jacket
- 1 warm jacket
- 1 pair of light shoes for evenings
- 3 pairs of shorts

TOILETRIES

Aspirin, Antiseptic cream, Chapstick or lip balm, Sunscreen, Band Aids, Extra pair of prescription glasses or contact lenses, Anti-diarrhea medicine, Skin moisturizer, Eye and nose drops/moisturizer, shaving kit, Toothbrush and toothpaste, Hair brush, Deodorant, Nail clippers, Personal toiletries, Insect repellent (containing DEET) I have found the towelettes with the insect repellent work well, Sunglasses, and Moist towelettes.

ACCESSORIES

Good binoculars, Flashlight (provided in Singita), Reading materials, Pen and paper, or writing journal/diary.

Key Highlights | South Africa

There is much to see in South Africa. It is impossible to cover it all. The most frequented tourist highlight in connection with a safari is a visit to Cape Town including the Wine Country the Cape of Good Hope, and the Garden Route.

Cape Town | 3-4 days is advisable

The setting for Cape Town is one of the most dramatic on earth. It is considered to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Table Mountain, Devil's Peak, and Lion's Head Mountains surround it on three sides, on the fourth side is the Atlantic Ocean. Table Mountain is 3562 ft high, can be seen for 120 miles out to sea, making it an excellent landmark for sailors. At times, Cape Town seems European and then other times African, it is a blend of both. Cape Town has everything a Western city has; five-star hotels, fine restaurants and shopping malls. It also has beautiful gardens, parks, and cultural activities. It also has things that many Western cities do not have, incredible beaches, superb mountains and outstanding historical vineyards.

Garden Route | 2-4 nights is advisable

One of the most spectacular drives in South Africa is the famous Garden Route from Mossel Bay to the Tsitsikamma Forest. The most popular portion of the scenic highway is from George to Plettenberg Bay 56 miles and then from Plettenberg Bay to Port Elizabeth 132 miles. To drive from George to Port Elizabeth would take about four hours. You can reach the Garden route by air from Cape Town or Johannesburg and fly to either George or Port Elizabeth. The flight will be about an hour.

Medical Concerns | African Safari

Health Requirements and Information for Southern Africa

Because requirements change from time to time, it is strongly suggested that you check with your local immunization clinic, public health facility or personal physician to find out what immunizations are required and/or suggested for your overseas journey. In addition to your physician, a good source of health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (the "CDC") in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded "International Travelers' Hotline." You can access the "Hotline" by phoning toll-free to 888-232-3228. Information can be mailed or faxed to you. You can also access the same information on the CDC website at www.cdc.gov

There are no specific vaccination requirements for North American visitors. Malaria prophylaxis is strongly recommended when visiting Mpumalanga and Northern KwaZulu Natal.

If you are arriving in (or planning to re-enter) South Africa from an area infected with yellow fever or a country where yellow fever is endemic (such as Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, or Zaire), you are **required** to have a yellow fever vaccination. This vaccination must be administered at least (10) days before your arrival (or re-entry) into South Africa. If your travel itinerary requires you to have a yellow fever vaccination, you must ask your doctor to provide you with an "International Certificate of Vaccination," which should be carried with you at all times while traveling to serve as proof that you have fulfilled the vaccination requirement. If proof of vaccination is required and you do not carry it with you, you may be denied entry into South Africa.

Visitors should bring their own prescription drugs for personal conditions. South Africa is one of the few countries in Africa where you can drink the water in major cities and eat salads or unpeeled fresh fruits and assume Western sanitation standards are followed.

Do not swim in any lake or river in South Africa. Many are infested with a parasite called bilharzia, which if left untreated, can eventually lead to death. There are also crocodiles in certain areas.

It is suggested that you bring insect repellent (**preferably containing 100% DEET**). For the fierce sun, a good sun screen is recommended, as well as a wide-brim hat.

General Travel Information | South Africa

Frequently Asked Questions

AIRPORT & ARRIVAL INFORMATION

The principle international airport is the Johannesburg International Airport, located 19 miles from downtown Johannesburg (and about the same distance to Pretoria). Cape Town's airport is also an international airport and is located 14 miles from the city. The airport in Durban accepts certain international flights.

Regulations do not permit passengers to be met inside secured passenger areas (such as the Customs area) when arriving into South Africa on an international flight. If a Ker & Downey representative is scheduled to meet you on arrival (at Johannesburg International Airport, for example), you will be met immediately after you have passed through the secured passenger areas. Look for a driver carrying a sign with your name or the name of your party on it.

NOTE: passengers connecting to a domestic flight within South Africa immediately after an international arrival in Johannesburg will need to claim their checked baggage at Johannesburg in order to clear it through customs in Johannesburg. It will not be transferred automatically onto domestic flights.

AIRPORT TAX

Airport taxes are included in ticket prices There is a separate landing tax at Skukuza and the cost is constantly changing..

CLOTHING

South Africa's climate is varied both geographically and by season. You must plan accordingly. Also, certain elements of your tour might require a specific type of clothing, or dictate a dress code. We recommend packing lighter weight clothing that can be worn in layers. Do not overpack. Laundry is done daily while you are in private tented camps and almost all hotels have a laundry service available.

Mostly, you will want lightweight clothes. Cotton and cotton/synthetic mixtures are most comfortable. Dress mainly for outdoor comfort. A cotton bush jacket or golf jacket with pockets is a good idea. You might want to take two sets of lightweight outer clothing for travel and game viewing, so that you can wear one while the other is being laundered. In the summer months, lightweight clothing made of natural fabrics is recommended with one warm sweater or jacket for cooler evening temperatures. In winter, warmer clothing is suggested, especially

for evenings. During the months of June, July, and August, gloves, a scarf, and a hooded warm-up jacket may be necessary at higher elevations.

In major South African cities, hotels and restaurants require "smart casual" dress. This is generally defined as jacket and tie for men and better (though not formal) dress for ladies. (NOTE: Those traveling on Rovos Rail and the Blue Train need to observe this code.) Denim is not acceptable in better establishments in the evening.

Safari can be dusty, and while game viewing, tan, khaki and other neutral colors are most practical. You will want an informal change of clothes for dinner at the end of the day. In the austral winter, you will need a wool sweater or jacket when game viewing in the early morning hours and when out of doors in the evening. This is a must. Bring a hat for sun protection, especially to wear in the vehicles while driving in the parks, as the tops are left open for game viewing and photography. Generally, you will not need heavy footwear unless you plan to do much walking. A pair of comfortable walking shoes, tennis shoes or desert boots will do. A change of shoes at the end of the day is pleasant; therefore, an extra pair of lightweight shoes (low heeled for ladies) is recommended for evenings at the lodges. Carry lightweight sleepwear, as blankets are readily available. Heavy articles of clothing needed for the air trip to South Africa and return when weather is cold elsewhere possibly may be left in hotels or airport storage facilities so you do not suffer the inconvenience of carrying them. You can collect them on your return before leaving Africa. This indeed depends on the itinerary you are following.

ACCESSORIES

A pair of dark glasses is almost a necessity, as is a hat providing protection from the sun. Many people need to use protective sunburn cream or sunscreen. If you wear prescription glasses, take an extra pair and a copy of the prescription. Carry binoculars for added pleasure in game viewing. A lightweight six-times zoom power pair would probably be adequate and easy to hold. Take a small lightweight flashlight. Electric razors and hair dryers are a problem because of voltage, which will differ in different locations. We suggest you invest in a transformer kit, complete with a set of plugs. If possible, use battery; run appliances and take extra batteries.

It is advisable to have insect repellent such as Cutters. Wash'n'Dry towelettes are always useful to freshen up while in the bush, as are Kleenex packets. Chapstick or moisturizing creams are a must for the dry climate.

Extra items to consider: playing cards, backgammon set, swimsuit, paperback books and traveling alarm clock.

CONSULAR INFORMATION SHEETS

The U.S. Department of State issues Consular Information Sheets for every country of the world. They give important information about each country, including the location of U.S. Embassies and Consulates abroad. You can listen to Consular Information Sheets by phoning (202) 647-5225. Alternatively, the information can be faxed to you by dialing (202) 647-3000 from your fax machine and following the prompts. This information is also available on their website at [International Travel | US Dept of State](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION | KEENE LUXURY TRAVEL'S PREFERRED TOUR OPERATOR

Ker & Downey in Houston has a 24-hour emergency answering service at (713) 539-7108. This number has been put into service to assist all clients who might find themselves stranded in an emergency situation after their travel arrangements have begun. This number is for emergencies only. To assist you in the event you must be reached while traveling, contact information will be provided with your final tour materials. While traveling in South Africa with Ker & Downey, you may also be reached through the USA office.

Ker & Downey

Phone: (713) 917-0048

Address: 2825 Wilcrest Drive, Suite 600, Houston, TX 77042 USA

Fax: (713) 917-0123

The suppliers Ker & Downey use in South Africa act as liaisons while our clients are on tour. When final documents are issued, contact details will be given that clients may leave behind for emergencies.

CURRENCY

The unit of currency is the Rand (ZAR) which is divided into 100 cents. Coins are available in R5, R2, R1, 50c, 20c, 10c, 5c, 2c, and 1c. Bank notes are available in denominations of R200, R100, R50, R20, and R10. All commercial banks, hotels, shops, etc. accept credit cards and travelers' checks.

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

Travelers may import personal effects, used cameras, radios, firearms, one liter of liquor, one and one-half liters of wine, 400 cigarettes, but all other articles are dutiable if they exceed a value of ZAR 500. For firearms, a permit is necessary and is issued by Custom Officials at the point of entry. The firearm must have a number stamped in the metal.

There is no limit to the amount of foreign exchange that a visitor can bring into South Africa. On arrival, visitors must complete customs forms listing all their holdings of currency. On departure, visitors are allowed to take out as much as is shown on the form. The amount of South African Reserve bank notes you may carry in or out is R500.

Foreigners may have the 14% VAT (Value Added Tax) refunded when they leave, but only for goods they have with them. If they have receipts and tax invoices available, (ask the vendor for a VAT 263 form). If the total VAT charged is more than R250. There are duty free shops at Johannesburg International, Cape Town and Durban Airports. Visit the [VAT Refund Administrator website](#) for complete VAT Refund Procedures.

DRIVING

Any valid driver's license is accepted in South Africa provided it bears the photograph and signature of the holder and is printed in English. Driving is on the left. Road signs and speed limits are posted in kilometers. It is compulsory to wear your seat belt. Gasoline (petrol) is expensive and cannot be purchased with a credit card! Be prepared and carry adequate Rand to accommodate your journey.

FOOD

There are some excellent lamb, beef and seafood dishes that are offered in South Africa as well as many Chinese, Italian, French, Portuguese and Indian restaurants, including those serving South African cuisine.

In the local restaurants, try crayfish (similar to lobster) and bobotie (curried meat dish). The private Game Reserves offer wild game meat in their restaurants. Some rank South African wines and beers with the best. As a bonus they are cheaper than imports.

GENERAL

South Africa, a rich cultural kaleidoscope cultural diversity is one of the country's most dynamic components. In the shadow of soaring glass and concrete superstructures, Victorian bungalows rub shoulders with gracious Cape Dutch buildings, mosques, temples and modern townhouses. Theaters, museums, festivals and art galleries flourish, and in remote rural villages, tribal people tend their cattle and invoke their ancestors in times of trouble.

Restaurants offer delectable local cuisine and international culinary creations, while South African wines compete with the finest in the world. The entertainment repertoire ranges from classical music, ballet and theater to ethnic fringe, cross-cultural jazz, African rhythms and graceful Indian dances.

LANGUAGE

There are eleven (11) official languages, but English and Afrikaans are the main spoken languages.

PASSPORT AND VISA INFORMATION

Valid passport is required and onward or return ticket, but no Visa for U.S. and Canadian Citizens for a tourist stay up to 90-days. If you are not an USA citizen, check with your Travel Agent or local Consulate for specific information. All visitors to South Africa are required to have a minimum of two blank pages in their passport, for each entry into South Africa. The blank pages enable the entry visa to be issued upon arrival. If there is insufficient space in the passport, entry will be denied. In addition, the passports must be valid for at least six months after you return home. If a father or mother is traveling with his or her underage children (without the other parent), a letter of consent needs to be signed by the other parent and

certified by the police. If the traveler does not obtain the letter, they travel at their own risk. For grandparents traveling with grandchildren, you need also to carry a letter giving the parents' consent.

PHOTOGRAPHY

For photographing birds and game, a telephoto lens is essential. Minimum size recommended is 200mm. With larger lenses you get better results, but with, say 500mm lens, you may have problems not only of holding but also from the shimmering heat haze. As a general rule, lenses of up to 300mm can be satisfactorily hand held, but larger lenses need some form of support. Remember that tripods are generally impractical, because game photography must be done from inside the vehicle.

For Digital Photography, be sure to bring plenty of memory cards and a battery charger. You will be able to charge in Cape Town and in most camps. Most chargers are 110-220 volts.

Remember that the one constant is the sudden speed at which the action will break. Be prepared for the unexpected and keep your camera handy.

Photographing government buildings, military stations, soldier and certain tribes is often considered offensive and is even illegal in some cases. In all such instances, use your discretion; if in doubt, ask your guide or ranger.

Photo Equipment Suggestions: We recommend that you bring good camera and/or video equipment which you have tested beforehand and are comfortable using. The African bush is no place to learn what all of those buttons really mean. If you are taking still photographs, it is essential to take at least two cameras with you to Africa; a third for a back-up wouldn't hurt. If your only camera fails, you will regret not having a "Plan B." For videos, bring plenty of pre-charged batteries and an adaptor for recharging. Remember that replacement parts and repairs are basically non-existent in Africa, so it's better to have than have not.

Type of Camera: Of course, everyone has their own preference, Nikon, Canon, etc. If you use a point and shoot, it is preferable to have at least a 10x-12x zoom. Some of the point and shoot cameras take great photos.

What do I take to Africa? I am often asked what equipment I use in Africa. I carry the Canon EOS 7D. I also use another body, the Canon Digital Rebel as a back-up. My lenses are the 15x85mm wide angle and 100x400mm zoom lens that I use on my 7D.

Carry-on for small safari aircraft: In most cases, space is very limited on small aircraft, but I usually hold my camera equipment on my lap. There have been many times that I have put my case in the back with the luggage. I do have a very padded camera case.

Voltage: Throughout Africa, usual voltage is 220-240 AC. A power converter will be necessary for appliances that run only on 110-120 AC or you will burn up your appliances. A few hotels may have 110-volt outlets but most game parks will only have the 220-240-volt outlets. The game parks will provide a plug adaptor but usually not a power converter.

The United States and most of the Western hemisphere use electrical systems operating at 110-120 volts. Almost every other country uses 220-240 volts as a standard. South Africa uses 220-240 AC.

An adaptor is simply a connector that changes the plug shape to match the outlet. It does not change the voltage or electrical output in any way. If you know that the plug shape is the only difference between your equipment and the electrical system that you are planning to use, and that your appliance is DUAL VOLTAGE, then an adaptor is all you need.

A converter changes the voltage from 220 to 110 voltage. If your equipment requires a specific voltage, then you need a converter. Converters use an electric switch to approximate 110v by rapidly cutting on and off the current received from a 220v source. This is okay for some electrical items like hairdryers but not good for anything electronic (something with a computer chip in it). Also, converters should not be used for anything that is going to be plugged in longer than a few minutes.

Confusing an adaptor and a converter: The **converter** changes the voltage from 220 to 110 volts to allow you to use 110-volt appliances. Do not confuse this with an **adaptor** which just changes the plug configuration, **NOT THE VOLTAGE!!**

Often the rooms have adaptors, but you may need more than one. It never hurts to have a spare. With camera batteries charging, computers running, curling irons and all of the electrical appliances you may have - one adaptor may not be enough.

SUGGESTED PHOTO EQUIPMENT

Digital Camera - body and lenses

- Wide angle lens, 16-85mm range
- Zoom lens, 100-300mm range

Digital Camera - point and shoot

- Zoom, at least 10x-12x digital zoom
- Image stabilization is a plus if it comes with the camera
- A small beanbag (sometimes furnished in your safari vehicle) will stabilize your camera on the side of the vehicle
- Ample spare batteries for camera's flash

Pack your equipment in a good soft-sided case and carry it on the plane with you. Africa can be dusty and you should protect your equipment well. Plastic bags or cloth pillowcases are an ideal means of covering and storing your photographic equipment during your safari.

Africa Can Be Dusty

We suggest bringing the appropriate size zip lock bags to protect your equipment from the dust. If you have an SLR camera with multiple lenses and you have an extra camera body, it is a good idea to bring it with you. When you have to change lenses in a dusty atmosphere, you risk

dust and debris contaminating the sensor of the camera. This also helps as the action is unfolding, because you have multiple lenses to choose from instantly.

SOUTH AFRICAN PROVINCES

There are no longer any independent or autonomous HOMELANDS within South Africa. They have all been re-absorbed following the elections in 1994. There are now nine (9) provinces in South Africa, they are: Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Northern Province, Northwest Province, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Free State, and KwaZulu-Nata.

SAFETY

Street crime is in all major cities. Do not leave valuables in your hotel room (use the hotel safe). Avoid political demonstrations, funerals and gatherings. Do not drive into black townships anywhere until you have sought advice about the local situation.

SHOPPING

Value Added Tax (VAT) of 14% is levied on everything you buy, including hotel accommodations, food and car rentals. Be sure to find out if it is included in prepaid services. Link to more VAT information. If you buy gifts for export, VAT is charged, but is refundable on production of receipts when departing South Africa. Precious and semiprecious stones are very reasonable, as are African beadwork, woodcarvings, gold and diamond products, snakeskin items, leather goods, shields, masks, copperware and local art. If time permits, buy Safari clothes, they are cheaper and easier to find than in North America. Visit the [VAT Refund Administrator website](#) for complete VAT Refund Procedures.

SUGGESTED READING

The Covenant. James A. Michener. Random (1980). An all-encompassing account of South Africa's history told from the perspective of three families: African, Afrikaans, and English

Cry of the Kalahari. Mark and Delia Owens. Houghton Mifflin (1984). Captivating account of the authors'; seven-year research project in the central Kalahari Desert.

Land Mammals of Southern Africa. Reay H. N. Smithers. Macmillan (1986).

Newman's Birds of Southern Africa. Kenneth B. Newman. Macmillan (1983). Update Southern Books, 1992.

The Safari Companion: A Guide to Watching African Mammals. Richard D. Estes. Chelsea Green Publishing Company (1993).

Squandering Eden: Africa on the Edge. Mort Rosenblum and Doug Williamson. Bodley Head (1986). A compelling account of conservation issues Throughout the African continent.

GUIDEBOOKS

South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland: A Travel Survival Kit - Richard Everist (Lonely Planet).

Guide to South Africa - Philip Briggs (Hunter Publishing).

Travel Guide to South Africa - Les De Villiers (Business Books International, New Canaan, CT). (Does not include coverage of the South African "homelands").

GUIDEBOOKS TO LOOK FOR IN SOUTH AFRICA

Illustrated Guide to South Africa - (Automobile Association).

Illustrated Guide to South African Coast - (Automobile Association).

Reader's Digest Illustrated | Guide to the Game Parks and Nature Reserves of Southern Africa

TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS

Please be advised that some hotels impose a surcharge that can more than double the cost of international calls. Be sure to check the hotel policy before placing an international call from a hotel.

TIME ZONES

- EST plus seven hours [Plus six hours during daylight savings]
- CST plus six hours [Plus five hours during daylight savings]
- MST plus five hours [Plus four hours during daylight savings]
- PST plus four hours [Plus three hours during daylight savings]

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

- Passport with appropriate Visas and Health Certificates as recommended by your physician for your specific destination(s)
- Airline tickets (always reconfirm reservations 72 hours in advance)
- Traveler's checks
- Customs registration (cameras, videos, binoculars and expensive watches)

VOLTAGE

Throughout Africa usual voltage is 220-240 AC. An adapter will be necessary for appliances that run on 110-120 AC. You will need to have an adapter with you or you will not be able to use your electrical appliances.

[Walkabout Travel Gear](#) - The plug converter can be ordered here for \$4.00 others may find web sites with them cheaper. You also need to be sure that your hairdryer or curling iron is DUAL voltage and automatically changes when plugged in. Many hairdryers and curling irons are dual voltage now almost all travel items are dual voltage. In the top properties in South Africa that we recommend, you will be able to use hairdryers and appliances. In some of the smaller tented camps, this may not be the case.

WILDLIFE

Most visitors to South Africa do enjoy the wildlife and its magnificent unspoiled wilderness areas. The country's terrestrial mammals are among the best on earth, numbering over 300 species that range in size from the tiny pigmy shrew to the imposing elephant. The "Big Five" (elephant, rhino, leopard, buffalo and lion) and birdlife of more than 900 species can be seen. This broad topic cannot be addressed properly in this document. Check the Reading List at the located within this information if you would like more detail on the wildlife.